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# A HISTORY OF ATLANTA 1853 - 1953



**Prepared by Citizens of Atlanta  
As a Part of the Observance of the  
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## ATLANTA IS FOUNDED

The coming of the Chicago & Alton railroad through Central Illinois gave impetus to the founding of many cities and villages along its right of way. With visions of rapid growth and resulting financial profits to the promoters, lands were acquired, surveyed and divided into lots and blocks. Such was the beginning of Atlanta.

## THE TOWN OF NEW CASTLE

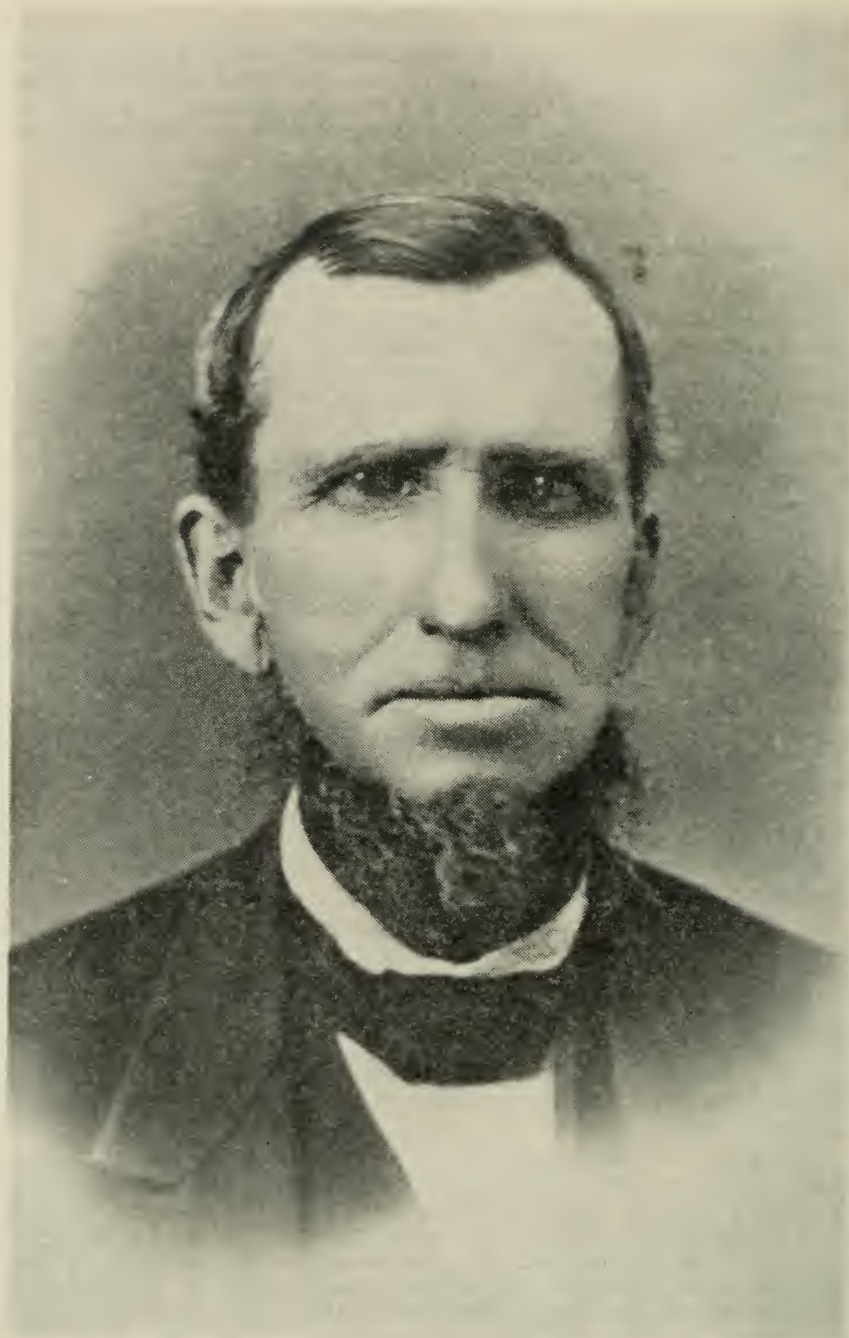
When Atlanta was first laid out, there existed a short distance to the southeast a town which was known as New Castle. The town was platted on Section 28 of present Atlanta township by Timothy B. Hoblit and James Allen, December 2, 1836. It was located on the old stage line between Springfield and Bloomington and boasted of several stores, a blacksmith shop and several residences. The Baptists had built a church here in 1839.

The following list of names is found subscribed to a petition for the sale of school lands in the Congressional township in 1841 and indicates the settlers in and around New Castle at that early date: Samuel Hoblit, William Gard, Thomas Larison, William Bonine, Samuel Bevan, Henry Hornaker, John E. Hoblit, John Druley, Ezekiel Hedges, Benjamin Shipley, Isaac A. Dunagan, J. D. Tinney, James Shipley, Adam Stephens, Fleming Lynch, W. H. Seward, A. K. Martin, James Hedges, Harvey Turner, James Downey, Sylvester Strong, Samuel Jones, William Houchins, William Foley, Cornelius Lambert, Andrew Fogg, John Wintine, Elisha Bushnell, Jesse Dobby, J. P. Dunham, Joseph M. Cantrall, John Cline, O. T. Crawford, James Barr, Zebulon Cantrall, M. S. Bushnell, Edwin E. Bushnell, John Miller, William Dyer, George Dyer, Henry Williams, Raymond C. Rathbone, Charles Council, Noah Snedaker and Sampson Rees. Soon after Atlanta was laid out, New Castle was abandoned and the stores, people and the church moved into Atlanta.

The proprietors of the new town were Richard T. Gill, Morgan Williams and Calvin Riley, but Mr. Gill was the chief promoter. He had come to Illinois in 1840 and located in Pekin, Tazewell county, where he was sheriff from 1846 to 1850.

In 1852, he came to Logan county, and early in 1853, having ascertained that the Alton and Sangamon Railroad was to be extended from Springfield to Bloomington, he bought the land on which Atlanta now stands. This land was originally acquired from the government by a land patent by Lemuel Evans, as assignee of Benjamin Thompson. Thompson had served as a private in the United States Army and consequently had acquired a grant to this land which is legally described as the W $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and the E $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 20, Township 21N, Range 1 W. of the Third P. M.

The new town was named Xenia. The survey was made March 22, 1853, the town was dedicated April 7, 1853, and the first sale of lots at auction was June 23, 1853. It received its name at the suggestion of Mrs. James Downey, who had come from Xenia, Ohio. It continued to be called by this name until 1855 when upon application for a post office it was found that an office by that name already existed in Illinois. The founders of the town thereupon changed the name to Hamilton in honor of Col. L. D. Hamilton, but when applying for a post office under this name were met with the same difficulty.



Richard T. Gill



Finally, Richard T. Gill, remembering the beauty of Atlanta, Georgia, which he had recently visited, suggested that the new town be called Atlanta, and the name was adopted. A short act passed by the Legislature, February 14, 1855, states: "That from and after the passage of this act, the name of the town of Xenia in Logan County shall be and the same is changed to Atlanta."

During the first few years of its history, Atlanta gave promise of fulfilling the hopes of its founders. Atlanta was truly a boom town. At the end of 1854, when the town was little more than a year old, there were one hundred houses and the population was about 500. It had five dry goods stores, two drug stores, two grocer and confectionery stores, one hotel and four grain warehouses.

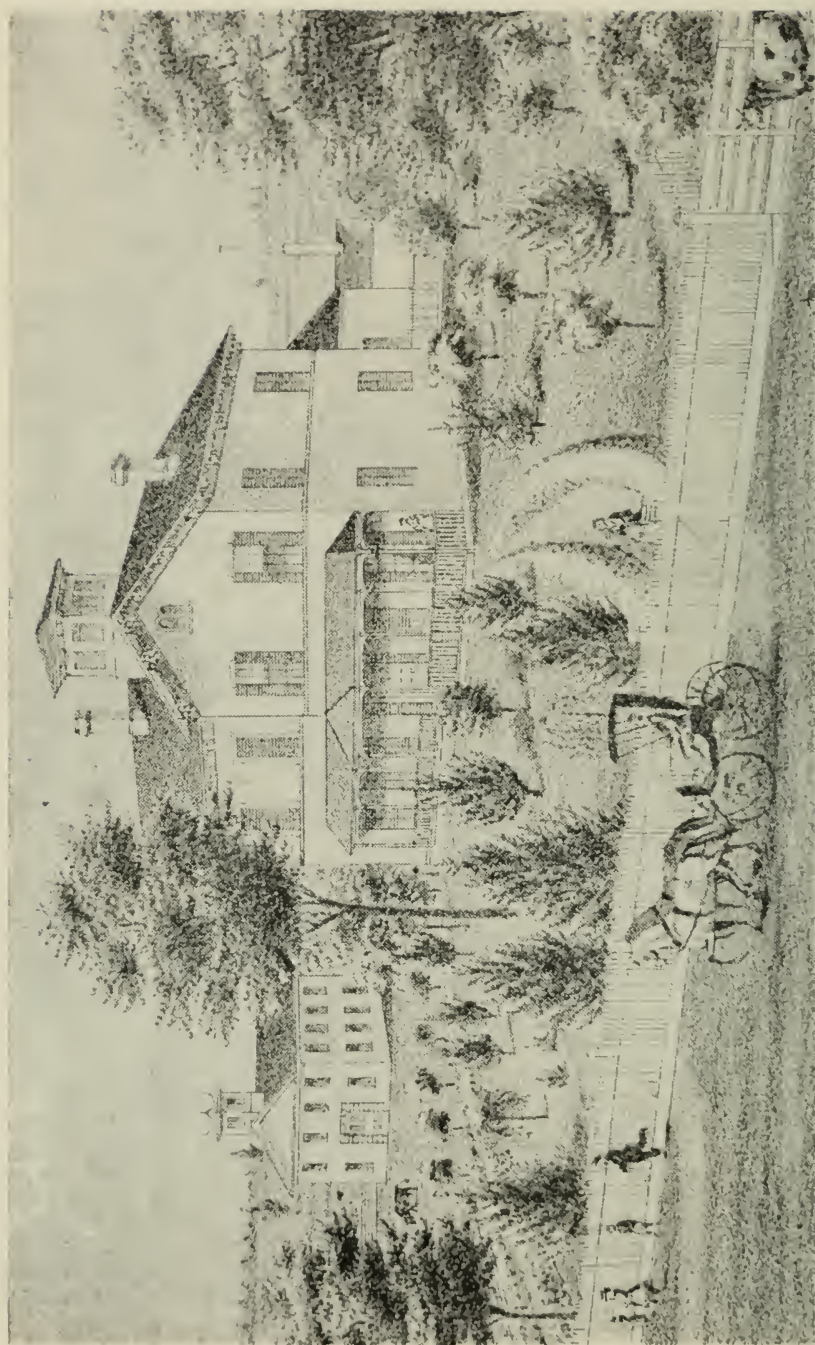
The year 1855 witnessed increased building activity with the erection of 155 houses, and the houses built in 1856 exceeded the number built the previous year. In June, 1856, Editor S. B. Dugger, of the Logan County Forum, listed eleven dry goods stores, three clothing stores, one book store, one banking house, four furniture stores, one hardware store and agricultural warehouse and seed store, two hardware tin and stove stores, five grocery and provision stores, four grain warehouses, one boot and shoe store, two millinery stores, two tailor shops, three hotels, two livery stables, two saddlery and harness stores, two jewelry stores, two tailor shops, one cabinet shop, two wagon and carriage shops, three blacksmith shops, one steam flour mill, one steam planing mill and sash factory, one printing office, two bake shops and one drinking saloon. There were four attorneys, seven physicians, four ministers and one dental surgeon.

Atlanta appears to have reached its high point at the end of four years (the spring of 1857). The population then was probably between 1,200 and 1,300. During these years, Atlanta was a far more enterprising and growing town than Lincoln and had a larger population. However, Lincoln had been chosen the county seat, and following the depression of 1857 forged rapidly ahead while Atlanta's population remained stationary.

## FIRST TOWN ELECTION

Following the incorporation of Atlanta under the town form of government on February 14, 1855, the first election was held April 2, 1855. Richard T. Gill was chosen President of the Board of Trustees. The other trustees elected were A. N. Dills, A. K. Martin, William P. Hunt, William S. Leonard and Cornelius Lambert. The Board met for the first time on April 7, when they named the following officers: John H. Ball, Clerk; Elsa H. Dunagan, Constable; H. Armington, Street Commissioner.

The town government was used until by a special act of the Legislature, approved March 4, 1869, a charter was obtained creating the city of Atlanta. This act was to take effect upon its adoption by the voters. A vote was taken on the proposition March 16, 1869, there being 173 votes favorable to city organization and 19 against. A special election was held March 23 for the election of city officers with the following result: Mayor, Samuel H. Fields; clerk, J. Henry Ball; marshal, J. B. Ransdell; treasurer, L. James; assessor and collector, S. D. Fisher; attorney, William E. Dicks; street commissioner, J. Finrock. The charter provided for three wards, with one alderman to each ward. Aldermen elected were: First ward, W. P. Hunt; second ward, George Estabrook; third ward, E. Stewart.



Residence of Richard T. Gill

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND ATLANTA

Abraham Lincoln was well known to several of Atlanta's pioneer families. Some of the earliest contacts were the friendships formed during the years when Lincoln was a circuit riding lawyer, travelling the stage road between Bloomington and Springfield. The course of that portion of the stage road which passed through Atlanta Township was recorded, in detail, by the late John L. Bevan, for many years an Atlanta attorney, in a letter written March 15, 1917 to Judge Lawrence B. Stringer. The road entered Atlanta Township at a point near Gordon's bridge, almost due south of the east boundary of the city of Atlanta. It ran in a north-easterly direction, crossing Clear Creek, a branch of Kickapoo, near the Roach Cemetery. The road continued north from this point, across the fields, until it emerged at the location of the Lincoln memorial marker on the east west road which is the north boundary of Atlanta Township. Bevan wrote that the old road bed could be seen part of the way and that he thought the old trail could be followed its entire length. He remembered, too, having seen stages passing on the old road just south of where New Castle was then located.

It was on the old stage road that Samuel Hoblit built the two story house in which he often entertained Abraham Lincoln, David Davis, Judge Treat and others equally well known, when on their way to and from Bloomington and Springfield. The house was situated west of the stage road, just north of the Roach Cemetery, and a little south of the road running east from the north edge of the City of Atlanta. The house stood until 1942, when it was torn down.

Illinois was divided then, as it is now, into judicial districts. Each was presided over by a judge, who traveled from one county-seat to another within his jurisdiction. At this time there were only nine judicial districts; consequently each district comprised a much larger area than do those of today. The judge was accompanied on his rounds by members of the local bar. The custom of riding a circuit was a necessity for a lawyer in those early periods since there was not enough legal business in any one of the small communities to support a lawyer. Later, during Lincoln's second partnership with Herndon, however, the work was not a matter of necessity but of choice. Lincoln liked the freedom of the road. He made friends at every place he stopped and had a close acquaintance with men of all sorts.

## SPEECH IN ARMINGTON'S HALL

Emmanuel Hertz in his "The Hidden Lincoln" quotes from a letter written by William H. Herndon to Jesse W. Weik, dated Springfield, Illinois, November 22, 1888.



"Dave Littler tells me this additional story. During some of the political canvasses, the people in Logan County, Illinois, just north of this county and adjoining it, had determined to have a large meeting, a grand rally, and had appointed the day and the hour. When the day and the hour arrived, the heavens opened up with a terrific storm; it blew in hurricanes and rained in torrents. Only about twenty persons appeared. Lincoln had felt this sting of disappointment and therefore he did not wish others to be disappointed. After some reflection he said: Boys, the day is bad, too bad for many people to appear here to hear me speak, but as you have dared the storm to hear a speech, you shall not be disappointed. Come, let us go over to Armington's Hall and I'll give you a talk such as I have."

The twenty went over to the hall and Littler, telling Herndon of the speech said that it was cool, dispassionate and learned. In a note added at the end of his letter Herndon wrote: "The place, village, at which the speech was made was Atlanta, Logan County, Illinois."

It seems probable that Armington's Hall was the three-story brick building referred to in the June 19, 1856 issue of the Logan County Forum, now in the possession of P. A. Carihfield of Atlanta. It was built by H. Armington and is thought to have been located where the Argus Office is now. This visit to Atlanta was made in 1856, during the Free-mont-Buchanan campaign.

## **PRACTICING THE FREEPORT SPEECH**

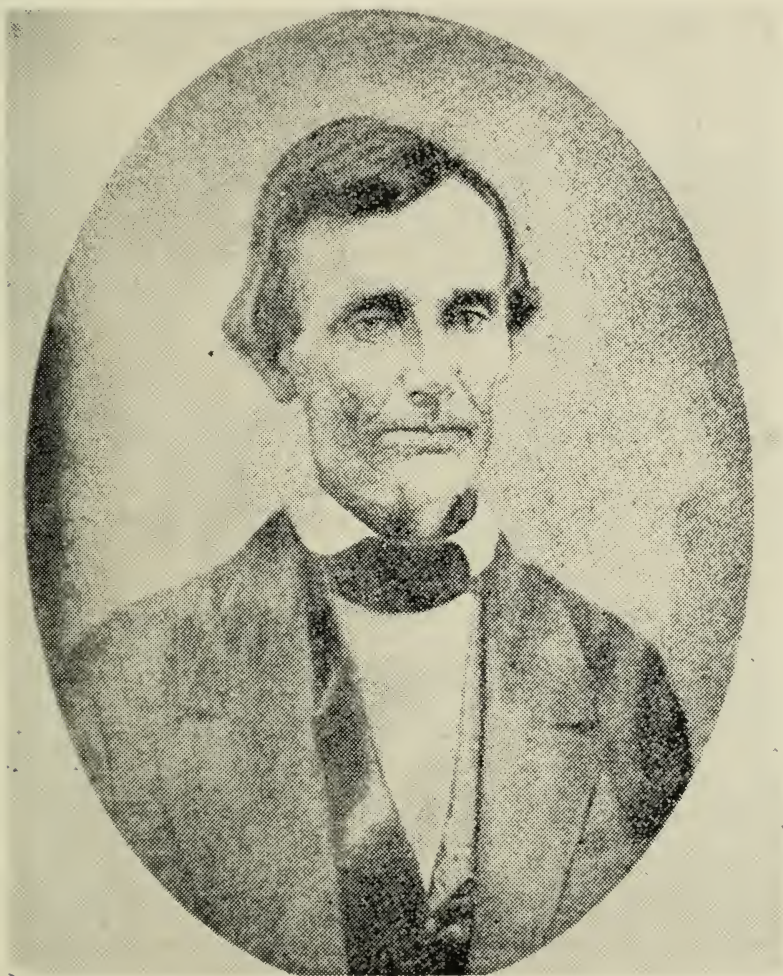
During Lincoln's campaign for the United States Senate in 1858 he stumped Illinois in a series of debates with his Democratic opponent, Stephen A. Douglas. At this time Lincoln was Counselor for Richard T. Gill, who had laid out the town of Atlanta. On August 26, 1858, the day before his famous Freeport speech, Lincoln stopped in Atlanta to advise Gill concerning some legal matters.

The late Dr. G. M. Angell, long a practicing physician in Atlanta, related the following to the late Roy H. Carihfield: "Gill then owned a large frame building, the first floor of which was filled with a stock of merchandise. I had an office on the second floor in front, while back of my rooms was an apartment, which Gill and his partners used as a private consulting room. When Lincoln had transacted his business with Gill, he asked if there was any quiet place where he could go so as not to be disturbed, for an hour or two, and said that he had to make a speech at Freeport the next day and wanted to think over what he was going to say. Gill took him to the consulting room, back of my office. A little later I heard a voice, in a vigorous tone, begin 'Judge Douglas says' and then



followed a speech to an imaginary audience. Gill came quietly up the stairway and whispered, 'Listen to Lincoln, he's practicing his Freeport speech.' Gill and I both listened to him a while. When, a few days later we secured a printed account of the great debate at Freeport, between Lincoln and Douglas, we recognized, at once, those portions of the address which Lincoln had delivered in Gill's back room in Atlanta."

James Hart, formerly of Atlanta, now of the Bloomington Pantagraph, has a letter from C. W. Gill, son of Richard T. Gill, dated March 10, 1941, in which he writes that he remembers that his father and those who helped



Photograph of ambrotype of Abraham Lincoln

in the store told of Lincoln's rehearsing his speech in the room over the store, his tramping back and forth and talking in a loud voice which could be heard downstairs.

## THE JULY 4, 1859 CELEBRATION

Atlanta citizens decided to celebrate the anniversary of the nation's birth on July 4, 1859. A committee was appointed to secure a speaker for the day. Rev. E. J. Thomas, chairman of the committee, wrote to Lincoln asking him to come and speak on the occasion. Lincoln replied that he was not good as a speaker for such an occasion and recommended James H. Matheny of Springfield, who, he said, could make a good Fourth of July speech and added that if Matheny agreed to come he would come with him. Matheny agreed to speak. He came and Lincoln came with him.

The meeting was held at Turner's Grove, located on the property adjoining the Atlanta Cemetery on the east and south. Rev. Thomas, in recalling the occasion said that the day was cold and raw and that there was a heavy frost. Paul M. Angle in his "Lincoln 1854-1861, Being the Day-by-Day Activities of Abraham Lincoln from January 1, 1854 to March 4, 1861" writes "Monday, July 4, 1859 ATLANTA. Lincoln attends a Fourth of July rally." Angle quotes briefly from the Illinois State Journal write-up of the celebration.

The Lincoln Herald of July 6, 1859 had this to say of the event: "The booming of cannon opened the day. A vast crowd from the country thronged the streets early. At ten o'clock, a procession was formed and started for Turner's Grove, one mile distant, and we are informed that when the head of the procession had reached the grove, the people were still forming at the rear in Atlanta."

There was music by the Atlanta Band and the Atlanta Glee Club. Rev. Thomas made an opening prayer, Dr. William T. Kirk, a local physician, read the Declaration of Independence and James H. Matheny made the Fourth of July speech. After Matheny's address, Sylvester Strong stepped forward and with a few words presented a cane to Lincoln, who up to this time had taken no part in the exercises. Lincoln responded briefly with well chosen words. Judge Stringer stated that the editor of the Lincoln Herald, Mr. Dake, was present on the occasion and that he probably wrote the following item which was published in the July 6, 1859 issue: "The cane is of South American orangewood, topped with North American Buckthorn. It has a silver plate on top, bearing the words, 'Presented by S. Strong.' Strong and Lincoln are said to have become acquainted early in life, when each broke prairie, somewhere below Springfield. Upon a silver band, below the middle of the cane, is the first letter of Lincoln's name, and thence downward there is a knot for every other letter of his name, covered with a silver plate and inscribed with

its appropriate letter. The silver plate work was executed by Dr. Perkins and the engraving by H. O. Rodgers, both of Atlanta." Dr. George R. Perkins was an Atlanta dentist whose address as given in the 1856 directory as the Logan House.

Mrs. Anna Strong Forgy, granddaughter of Sylvester Strong, telling the story as she had heard it repeated many times, said: "Grandpa with his cane sat on the platform with the speakers, and he was so impatient to give Mr. Lincoln the cane that he hardly waited until the last words were said." Mrs. Forgy said also that after Lincoln's death, she wrote to Mrs. Lincoln, asking about the cane. Mrs. Lincoln wrote that it had been given to a cousin and that she did not know where it was. It is not known where the cane is now but it is thought to be in a collection of Lincolniana in the east.

After the Fourth of July program Lincoln walked with Strong across the field to the Strong home about a mile south of Atlanta, due south of the Atlanta fair grounds. The house is situated in the pasture, about fifty rods south of the east-west road. In the course of the conversation Strong told Lincoln that he did not have a picture of him. Lincoln replied, "Why is that? I will send you one when I go back home." Soon afterward Strong received the picture. It was a small ambrotype believed to have been taken by Preston Butler in Springfield in 1858. The picture was borrowed in the early 1890s by Alfred Montgomery, an Atlanta resident quite well known in this vicinity for his paintings of corn. He sent it to Ida M. Tarbell whose life of Lincoln was being published serially in McClure's Magazine. A full page reproduction of the picture appeared in the March, 1896 issue. The picture appears as No. 17 in the 1944 copy of "Photographs of A. Lincoln" Frederick Hill Meserve and Carl Sandburg. All trace of this ambrotype appears to have been lost.

In the evening of the day of the celebration an ice cream with entertainment was held at the Congregational Church, at the corner of Elm and Fifth Streets, now the location of the house purchased by School District No. 20 to be the residence of the superintendent of schools. The ladies of the church had planned the social for the purpose of obtaining money to purchase pews for the new church building which had just been completed. Both Lincoln and Matheny attended. During the evening James Wren, a local baker, came forward to present to Lincoln a cake he had baked for the occasion. He became embarrassed and stood before Lincoln, holding out the cake, unable to utter a word of the speech he had carefully planned. The situation became an embarrassing one, the speechless baker holding the cake before Lincoln, and apparently rooted to the spot. Lincoln relieved the tenseness by saying to the group, "Well, I'm not as hungry as I look." Everyone laughed, including the baker. Lincoln thanked the baker, turned around and presented the cake to the ladies of the church. It was then sold at auction. Rev. Thomas bought it.

In the fall of 1859 Lincoln accepted an invitation from Gov. Chase of Ohio to make a speech in Columbus. He asked Strong to accompany him





Campaign Banner of 1860

and he went. Lincoln took the cane with him on this trip.

When the news reached Atlanta that on May 18, 1860 the Republican National convention had nominated Abraham Lincoln for president of the United States there was an enthusiastic celebration. Cannons were brought out and thirty-three rounds of ammunition were fired in honor of the event. An organization of Lincoln "Wide-awakes" was formed in Atlanta on June 22, 1860 to aid in the election of Lincoln and his running mate, Hannibal Hamlin. A large banner of five feet ten inches long and four feet ten inches wide was prepared by two local men, Reuben D. Neal and R. N. Lawrance, to be carried in the Wide-awake parades. Neal was a photographer and painter; Lawrance worked for him. On the left side of the banner is the finely sketched likeness of Lincoln; on the right is Hamlin, U. S. senator from Maine at the time of his nomination as candidate for the vice-presidency. The campaign symbols of the "Railsplitter" candidate, the axe, maul and wedge are clearly seen on the banner and the slogan, "THE NATION'S CHOICE" appears near the bottom of the banner. Other banners were made to be used in the campaign but this one seems to be the only one having the likenesses of both candidates. It is said to have been placed at the head of the parade at the monster rally at Springfield, August 8, 1860 which closed the campaign.

After the election of Lincoln, Lawrance removed the banner from its stretcher and carefully preserved it. After service in the Civil War Lawrance studied dentistry and after practicing elsewhere for several years eventually opened an office in Lincoln. His son, Dr. E. P. Lawrance, also a dentist later shared his office, and after the father's death continued to practice there. About three years ago the banner, faded and brown with the dust and decay of ninety years was restored and framed. The breaks in the coarse cloth on which the picture was made are visible but it is generally agreed that a good job was done restoring it. Dr. E. P. Lawrance presented the banner to Lincoln College at the time of their commencement in June, 1950. It now hangs on the north wall of the Lincoln Room of Lincoln College.

## THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

When the news of the death of President Lincoln on April 15, 1865 reached Atlanta the horror and gloom which prevailed over the nation were felt here. But there were, in addition, the grief and sorrow which follow the loss of a personal friend. The funeral car, bearing the body of Lincoln from Washington to Springfield reached Atlanta early on the morning of May 3, 1865. A large number of people had assembled and the train was met with muffled drum and portraits of Lincoln with emblems of mourning.

These memories of Lincoln, told and retold many times, are an important Atlanta heritage. The early settlers shared the sturdiness and self-reliance which were characteristic of Lincoln. These stern qualities are the background from which Atlanta has grown.

## AGRICULTURE

The early settlers in Atlanta Township preferred the timber to the prairie. A characteristic of the settlement of the township was the staking out of claims in the timber lands adjacent to the creeks. These pioneers came from a timbered country and, since they were accustomed from childhood to seeing "clearings," the timber had more the appearance of home and in addition furnished fuel and protection from the chilling winds.

It was a common practice among the pioneers to clear the timber from a small area, in one instance fifteen acres is mentioned, fence it, plow it as well as they could among the roots and stumps, and plant it in corn and pumpkins. They made a double use of the prairie grass; they used that which made a moderate growth for hay, and that which grew in the swamps and made a rank growth, for making shelter for their stock.

Although the early settlers considered as ridiculous the idea that crops could be grown on the prairie some of them began experimenting with the cultivation of the prairie ground. To their surprise the prairie produced almost twice as much per acre as the timber land. The prairie regions offered advantages much superior to the timbered country. In the timbered country a large amount of work had to be done to remove the trees, and for many years after, the stumps prevented free cultivation of the soil. In contrast to this, on the prairie the sod had only to be turned and the crop put in. It was soon evident that this was to be an important agricultural area.

That the future of Illinois as an agricultural state had much to do with bringing many of the early settlers here is indicated by the material included in the book "Illinois As It Is," written in 1857 by Fred Gerhard of New York. At this period there was a great mass of emigration from Europe and Gerhard was seeking to direct it to Illinois. He secured the material for his book from letters written to him by early residents here in reply to his letters asking for information concerning conditions in Illinois. This book is considered of historical value. The University of Illinois does not permit the copy there to be sent from the library and the Illinois State Historical Library sends out one of their copies only by registered mail.

This statement is made by Gerhard — "The virgin soil, adapted by nature for immediate culture, only awaits the plough and the seed, in



order to mature golden ears of the most beautiful corn. — No additional fertilizer is needed; the soil consists of a rich black mould. — Illinois offers the amplest guarantees for the rapid thriving and ultimate success and welfare of those who may wish to establish for themselves a 'Home in the West'."

At an early date the prairie sod was broken by an ox team of six to ten yoke with a heavy, unwieldy looking plow. The plow beam was framed into an axle, on each end of which was a wheel sawed from an oak log. Corn was planted by cutting a gash with an ax into the inverted sod, dropping the corn and closing it with another blow beside the first. After the farmer had gathered the year's crop of corn, with husks attached, he had a husking bee. Friends came from miles around and after the husking was completed an old time dance was held.

In the cultivation of wheat the plowed land was smoothed by dragging brush over it. The wheat was sowed broadcast by hand and harrowed in with brush. Either a sickle or a cradle was used to cut the wheat. The wheat was then bound and shocked. When sufficiently cured it was taken to some place on the farm convenient for threshing and there put into a stack. The threshing was done by flail or tramping with horses. The straw was cleaned by letting it fall from the height of ten or twelve feet and letting the wind blow away the chaff.

Oats also were grown but there was no need for fields of timothy or clover as the prairies yielded tons of hay which could be had for the cutting. Little attention was paid to the rotation of crops since the rich soil produced whatever was expected of it and most farmers, thinking it unnecessary to pay any regard to the land, were under the impression that they best guarded their interests by cultivating exclusively what commanded the highest price.

In one respect the early farmer had an advantage over the farmer of today. His crops were not injured by insects. The prairie grass was set on fire each year and all the country burned over so there was little hiding place for insect life and the crops grew so rapidly on the new and fertile soil that, if any destructive insects existed, the damage they did was so small as not to be noticed. Numerous insects and diseases now invade the farmers' fields of grain.

The horse was very important to the farmer until the 1940s when many farms had become completely mechanized. In the 1880s trading in horses was an important business. Many traders made trips to Europe

to buy horses to be shipped back and sold to the farmers. The breeding of fine draft horses was also an important business. But since the 1920s mechanized equipment has gradually replaced horse operated implements until now there are many farms without a horse on them.

Early fences were the zig-zag rail fence and the board fence in which two posts and three boards constituted a panel. But the fence most highly recommended was the hedge fence and hedge plants were grown to be sold to the farmers to be set out on their farms. This fence did not become an effective fence until about four years after being finished so that another fence was erected outside the hedge fence to serve during the interval. The hedge fence, because of its luxurious growth above ground and its extensive root system, prevented the planting of crops for several feet at the edge of the field. As cultivation of the soil became more intensive this became more and more of a handicap. Most of the hedges have been pulled and replaced with fences of other types. The barbed wire fence has been used on many farms. It takes up very little space and has this additional advantage; it can be taken up and used in another place if desired. The latest fence to come into use is the electric fence. A single wire is attached to a source of electricity and when an animal touches it he receives enough of a shock to discourage a further attempt to break through.

Improvements were begun early to make farming a science and a business. Agricultural societies, schools and experiment stations have studied practically every phase of farm life, and scientific principles have been applied to the solution of farm problems. The changes which have taken place in agriculture rival those which have taken place in industry. In the past fifty years there has been an agricultural revolution. The revolution has many phases — machinery, new livestock, insecticides, irrigation, fertilizers. Machines have changed the every day life of the farmer — automobiles, tractors, hay balers, combines, corn pickers, electric milking machines and many others which are not directly connected with farming but which make living on the farm more attractive. Farming is now a complicated business requiring a rather large investment and involving many risks over which the farmer has no control.

As interdependence between the city and the farm became more pronounced, the rural communities lost their isolation. There was a time when living in the country was a lonely life. Farm women were diffident and farm children were timid and bashful because they seldom met anyone outside the family. Today farm people have a full social and cultural life. They take advantage of the good roads. They go more and mingle with people of all businesses and professions. Through their many organizations rural people are building a new social life adapted to these times and as full of pleasure as the husking bees, threshing rings, sausage makings, apple parings, quilting bees, sleigh rides and singing schools of other times.



## TRANSPORTATION

### CHICAGO & ALTON RAILROAD

As previously stated, Atlanta owes its beginning to the coming of the Chicago & Alton Railroad. The Alton and Sangamon Railroad Company was authorized by an act of the legislature of Illinois, passed Feb. 27, 1847, to construct a railroad from Alton to Springfield, a distance of 72 miles. Work on the road was commenced in 1849 and completed in 1852. On Feb. 11, 1851, the legislature passed a bill extending the road to Bloomington. As soon as the road was completed to Springfield in 1852 the work of pushing the road farther north was begun. The line reached Atlanta in the fall of 1853.

In the meantime the name of the road was changed to the Chicago & Mississippi Railroad. In 1855, the road was reorganized as the Chicago, Alton and St. Louis Railroad and the original line was extended to Joliet, being completed in 1856. At the same time, the line of the Joliet and Chicago railroad was leased in perpetuity, making a through line from Alton to Chicago. The name of the railroad was successively changed to St. Louis, Alton & Chicago; Alton, Chicago & St. Louis, and finally to the name, Chicago & Alton. Under this name, the system became one of the main arteries between Chicago and St. Louis. In the 1930's, the railroad came under the control of the Baltimore & Ohio system and later a part of the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio railroad, under which it is now operated.

An interesting chapter in the history of the Chicago & Alton railroad in connection with Atlanta was its project in the early part of this century to reduce the grade between Atlanta and Lawndale. The steep grade added much to the expense of operating freight traffic, and trains which could easily negotiate all other parts of the line became stalled on the Atlanta-Lawndale hill. A "pusher" engine was used for many years to help heavy trains up the grade, but this was an expensive and unsatisfactory method of solving the problem. A contract was awarded the Patton & Gibson Construction Co. to make a fill at the Lawndale end and a deep cut through Atlanta. The plans called for the railroad to go through Atlanta many feet beyow the level of the city streets, requiring viaducts at several of the main crossings. For this disfigurement of the town, the railroad offered many concessions, among which was the stipulation that all passenger trains should make regular stops in Atlanta, a distinction which the city enjoyed for many years.

However, the work of reducing the grade was never completed. After many thousands of tons of earth were moved and the work was well

underway, the road became involved financially and today the large mounds of earth north of Lawndale are the only visible results of a project which came to be known as "Felton's Folly." But modern inventive genius solved the problem which caused the railroad so much trouble and expense in the earlier days. The powerful diesel engines of the present day easily haul up the Atlanta-Lawndale hill long freight trains which were unheard of in the days of the steam locomotive.

## PEORIA, ATLANTA AND DECATUR RAILROAD

The circumstances surrounding the financing and building of the Peoria, Atlanta and Decatur Railroad proved to be an unpleasant and costly chapter in the history of the Atlanta community. The affair is well described in the Logan County history of the late Lawrence B. Stringer, and we quote as follows from his version:

The Peoria, Atlanta and Decatur Railroad was incorporated by act of the General Assembly, March 1, 1869. The incorporators were William R. Hamilton, Valentine Dewein, John T. Lindsay, Robert G. Ingersoll, Seth Talbot, A. N. Dills, H. Armington, W. S. Dunham, J. C. Prescott, Thomas Smith, F. N. Ewing, James Millikin and J. J. Peddecord. The capital stock was fixed at \$100,000. A meeting was held in Atlanta, April 17, 1869 to consider ways and means to advance the proposed road. Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, of Peoria, who was attorney for the road, addressed the meeting. It was the sense of the meeting that Atlanta township should subscribe to the capital stock, to the amount of \$50,000 and bonds be issued therefor. The proposition was submitted to the voters of the township, June 16, 1869, and the bonds were voted by a margin of 265 to 29. Work began on the road in 1870, but was not completed until the summer of 1874.

The Atlanta township bonds were issued and delivered to the company, but when the time came for the payment of taxes thereon, the company was met with a refusal to pay. It was claimed that the company had not complied with its part of the contract, that work on the road at that time had ceased, that the company did not intend to complete the road, that the act of incorporation was illegally passed, and that the bonds had been taken by the company without the consent of the supervisor. All this the company strenuously denied. In 1874, an injunction was applied for to restrain the collector from collecting taxes to pay interest on bonds. On trial, this injunction was dissolved. Finally, a compromise proposition, by which the township was to pay the bondholders \$62,000, for principal and interest of the bonds, was endorsed by the voters at an election



The High Wheel Bicycle  
(Oscar Hoose)

held in April, 1882, by a vote of 228 for and 72 against, and accepted by the bondholders, and the matter was thus settled.

On Nov. 4, 1874, the Peoria, Atlanta and Decatur Company consolidated its line with that of the Paris & Decatur and the Paris and Terre Haute Railroad Companies, forming a continuous line from Peoria to Terre Haute, Ind., and the consolidated lines assumed the name of Illinois



Midland. In 1886, the Illinois Midland was sold under foreclosure to a syndicate of Indianapolis capitalists and was reorganized as the Terre Haute and Peoria Railroad. In 1892, it was leased for ninety-nine years to the Terre Haute & Indianapolis Railroad, and for a short time was also under the control of the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis System. Until the great Pennsylvania System took over the lines on January 1, 1921, it was known as a part of the "Vandalia System" and is still so designated by many older people in this territory.

## THE BICYCLE AGE

The last decade of the nineteenth century saw the bicycle emerge as a popular means of personal transportation. The development of the "safety" bicycle with pneumatic tires, in contrast to the high wheel type of an earlier day, created a fad which swept the country. In Atlanta, the Atlanta Bicycle Club was formed, and sedate Atlanta ladies donned bloomers and divided skirts and in groups pedaled their wheels over the dusty roads of the countryside. Bicycle racing became the rage, and a race meet was held at the Atlanta Fair grounds in which riders of national renown competed for prizes of watches and diamonds. Baby Bliss, the ponderous fat boy from Bloomington was an attraction. Rivalry sprang up among local racers. One that is still remembered culminated in a match race between Fred Storrs and the late Marion Watt. After one postponement, the race was run on a track at the east edge of Armington with Watt the winner. Atlanta even had its own bicycle factory. Atlanta's young mechanical genius, George W. McIntyre, built sturdy machines which were highly prized by their owners.

## THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE ARRIVES

Atlanta people were introduced to the automobile through a chugging little one-cylinder Oldsmobile, brought here in 1902 by James C. Shores, and many still remember the thrill experienced in their first ride in this primitive machine. Soon others followed the example of Mr. Shores, and by 1910 the automobile was beginning to assume a role as a highly desirable pleasure vehicle in the lives of a number of Atlanta people. It was not until 1923, with the completion of the "hard road" (Illinois Route 4, later to become U. S. Route 66) that the automobile began to take its place as a family necessity. With a year round outlet from the city, our people quickly recognized the advantages and conveniences of this modern means of transportation, and the automobile became an influence in changing the daily living of our citizens, just as did the coming of the telephone and electricity in an earlier period.

## FIRES IN ATLANTA

In the early days of Atlanta, most of the buildings were of wood, and with no fire fighting facilities, disastrous fires were common. The first Atlanta House was destroyed by flames in 1857. R. T. Gill's warehouse burned January 9, 1861, including 7,000 bushels of corn and 1,200 bushels of wheat. In 1865, fire again broke out and laid waste all the buildings between Armington's block and Arch street. The same year, another equally disastrous fire destroyed other buildings in the business section, at which time the town records were unfortunately destroyed. A fire on the night of April 25, 1867, razed W. Mix & Company's hardware store, owned by Dr. Rankin; J. F. Hyde & Company's shoe store, owned by Alex Downey; Allen's drug store, owned by W. E. Dicks; Shores, Dunham & Company's store, loss \$5,000, besides several other smaller buildings. A fire engine was shipped in from Bloomington or the town would have been destroyed. On July 7, 1867, another fire destroyed the remainder of the block left standing from the fire of April preceding. This fire consumed Leonard's grocery store, Graser's grocery store, Flugel's shoe shop, Hicks & James warehouse, Seth Turner's warehouse, Dunlop's harness shop, Mason's grocery, the Downey building, printing office and other buildings. On July 11, four days afterward, E. H. Tuttle's warehouse burned.

In 1872, the Baptist church burned, and on May 25, 1873, West, Fluss & Company's planing mill was destroyed, at a loss of \$7,000. The Armington three-story brick block burned on April 5, 1874, with a loss of \$12,000, and in November, 1876, Dills & Houser's warehouse burned.

Another series of fires began in 1882. On July 5th of that year, the freight depot of the Illinois Midland railroad burned. The Turner & Tuttle mills were destroyed by fire October 26, 1882. These mills were built of brick and stone in 1868 by Harvey Turner and J. A. Hoblit at a cost of \$30,000. At the same time, Armington's elevator, with a capacity of 15,000 bushels of grain went up in flames. In 1885, Barnett's carpenter shop and Hilpert's wagon shop were burned, and in November of the same year the Cumberland Presbyterian church was consumed. On March 23, 1887, fire also destroyed a row of seven frame buildings on the corner of Vine and Arch streets. The Grant house burned August 27, 1889.

With the establishment of a waterworks in 1892, and the acquisition of some fire fighting equipment, disastrous fires became less frequent, but the spectacular blazes which destroyed the "Blue Barns," located on the present sites of the Willow Farms Dairy and Donald Menzel's home, on September 6, 1896, and the large livery barn on Arch street, in the summer of 1900, are still remembered. The fire which destroyed the schoolhouse in the summer of 1908 was one of the most costly fires in the city's history.

Since the formation of the Atlanta Fire Department in 1926, fire losses have been held to a minimum, a tribute to the department and to the city, which has provided adequate facilities for combating the scourge of fire.

## THE PRESS

The first individual to attempt to publish a newspaper in Logan County was S. B. Dugger, and he selected Atlanta as the scene of his journalistic venture. The paper was known as the Logan County Forum, and its first issue appeared in August, 1855.

S. B. Dugger and his brother, Jefferson L. Dugger, had been associated in the publication of the Macoupin Statesman at Carlinville. Both came to Atlanta in 1855, S. B. Dugger going into the newspaper business and launching the Forum, and Jefferson Dugger becoming a member of the mercantile firm of Gill & Co.

When the Atlanta boom subsided in 1858, Mr. Dugger discontinued the Forum and moved west.

Afterwards one or two other newspapers were started, among them the Logan County Journal in 1865, conducted by P. Casserly, but none continued successfully save the Atlanta Argus, which was established in May, 1869, by Albion Smith.

At the end of the year, Mr. Smith admitted F. B. Mills as a partner. After a time, Smith & Mills sold to A. W. Briggs, of Rhode Island, and he in August, 1874, sold to George L. Shoals.

It was during the Shoals ownership that the Carihfield family became identified with the Argus. H. Carihfield started in as "devil" March 25, 1875 since which time he had continuous active connection with the paper until his death in July 1935.

Mr. Carihfield purchased the plant from George L. Shoals in November, 1881, and in 1885 Robert C. Carihfield, a younger brother, was admitted as a partner. In 1908 the business was incorporated under the corporate name of Carihfield Bros. Inc., and H. Carihfield's two sons, Philip A. and Robert Eugene, were admitted to part ownership and active management in the business.

Robert C. Carihfield died in 1920; Robert Eugene Carihfield in 1925, and Horace Carihfield in 1935, after which the business was operated by Philip A. Carihfield until 1951, when it passed out of ownership in the Carihfield family after a span of seventy years, with the sale of the business to Sherman S. Stewart, of Mackinaw.

The issue of June 19, 1856 of the Logan County Forum; the issue of September 3, 1857 of the Atlanta Weekly Forum; and an issue of the Logan County Journal of December 15, 1865 are in the possession of Philip A. Carihfield.



## **ATLANTA LODGE No. 165, ANCIENT FREE and ACCEPTED MASONS**

Atlanta Lodge No. 165, A. F. & A. M., commenced work in Atlanta on the evening of December 7, 1854 under a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of the State of Illinois, of date November 23, 1854, with twelve charter members.

On October 2, 1855, the grand Lodge of the State of Illinois granted to Atlanta Lodge a special charter. The first officers were Richard T. Gill, Worshipful Master; Robert H. Killen, Senior Warden; George W. Rowell, Junior Warden; and Dr. J. B. Tenney, Secretary. There were thirty-three charter members: Lewis Eichburgh; Jerome B. Tenney; A. J. Thomas, Daniel Tenney, George W. Michaels, Orin H. Butler, George W. Goodheart, Joseph Tidd, Samuel Eichburgh, George W. Angell, H. D. Downey, John A. Druley, Mathew L. Fuller, Samuel Bevans, A. E. Forbes. Abel Larison, T. B. Douglass, Elijah S. Wicklin, A. K. Martin, John V. McGahan, Abram Winsor, D. W. Winsor Jr., George L. Parker, Thomas J. Larison, Daniel Proctor, Francis M. Tuttle, J. Henry Ball, James Larison, Jackson Hukill and Meyer Friedman.

At the present time (1953) there are 142 members, including one thirty-third degree Mason, Judge Frank S. Bevan.

## **ATLANTA CHAPTER No. 188, ROYAL ARCH MASONS**

Atlanta Chapter No. 188 R. A. M. was organized under dispensation April 19, 1882. Its charter is dated October 27, 1882. The charter members were W. T. Kirk, George F. Bennett, A. E. Church, J. G. Bourne, A. W. Chenoweth, Julius W. Regents, John S. Perriton, S. H. Fields, A. J. Ludlam, William Danenbaum, Dennis Kenyon, C. C. Aldrich and S. I. Leach.

## **ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR**

Atlanta Chapter No. 881, Order of the Esatern Star, was instituted March 17, 1922, with 25 charter members. Mrs. Muriel Selby was the first Worthy Matron, and Robert S. McIntyre, the first Worthy Patron. Other officers were: Mrs. Dora McIntyre, Associate Matron; Miss Mary Thomson, Secretary; Dr. Maskel Lee, Treasurer; Mrs. Ferne Crandall, Conductress; Mrs. Eugenia Lee, Associate Conductress; Mrs. Emily Carihfield, Chaplain; Joseph A. King, Marshall; Mrs. Sara Appenzeller, Organist; Mrs. Camilla Sheer, Adah; Mrs. Ema King, Ruth; Mrs. Edna Carihfield, Esther; Mrs. Laurinda Watt, Martha; Mrs. Edna Reinmiller, Electa; Mrs. Lillian Hamilton, Warder; Don Lee, Sentinel.

The charter members were: Mr. and Mrs. Horace Carihfield, Dr. and Mrs. Maskel Lee, Don Lee, Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Carihfield, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph A. King, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Reinmiller, Mrs. Muriel Selby, Miss Mary Thomson, Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Crandall, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Appenzeller, Mr. and Mrs. T. N. Hamilton, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Sheer, Mrs. Laurinda Watt, Raymond Wagner and Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. McIntyre.

An outstanding attendance record was made by Robert S. McIntyre, who missed but two meetings during his 27 years in the chapter.

The present membership in 1953 is 123.

## INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

In March 1855 twelve prominent business men of Atlanta met and formed an organization that embraced the principles upon which Odd Fellowship was founded. At this meeting, a petition was directed to the Grand Lodge of Illinois. The petition was accepted and a dispensation was granted.

Logan Lodge held its first meeting on April 15, 1855. At the next session of the Grand Lodge of Illinois, a charter was issued the new lodge naming it Logan Lodge No. 176. The charter was signed by Grand Master James E. Starr October 12, 1855, with Charles B. Van Horn as Noble Grand and William Van Horn as secretary.

The charter members were James P. Mead, Charles B. Van Horn, William Van Horn, Anthony N. Dills, John M. Gill, Louis Eichberg, J. M. Tuttle, Jefferson Dugger, B. F. Dalzell, Andrew D. Downey, Isaac V. Gray and J. M. Fisher.

## DAUGHTERS OF REBEKAH

Whittier Lodge No. 242, Daughters of Rebekah, was instituted in Atlanta, January 31, 1889, Mrs. Joseph Uhr being the first Noble Grand. Later this lodge disbanded.

On April 6, 1917, the new Whittier Rebekah Lodge, No. 804 was instituted by Mrs. Blanche Yancey, of McLean, who had been appointed special deputy by the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois.

The degree was conferred by Nona Lodge of McLean, and the following officers were elected: Noble Grand, Emma Mason; Vice Grand, Katherine Dreher; Secretary, Elizabeth Robinson; Treasurer, Hazel Miller. There were 38 charter members, 19 men and 19 women.

Charter members who are still active and still belong to the order are



Dell Dreher, Olive Baker and Hazel Miller. At the present time there are 80 members.

#### **ATLANTA CAMP No. 500, MODERN WOODMEN OF AMERICA**

Records show that Atlanta Camp No. 500, M. W. A. was instituted February 10, 1888, with the following officers: George I. McFarland, Consul; J. W. Gordon, Clerk; C. A. Jones, Banker. Roy A. Colaw, present clerk of Atlanta Camp, has served as secretary continuously since 1933.

#### **DIANA CAMP No. 1148, ROYAL NEIGHBORS OF AMERICA**

This camp was instituted September 20, 1898, and the charter was granted October 12, 1898. The first meeting was held on Nov. 12, 1898, at which time the officers were elected, a name for the camp was selected and by-laws were adopted. The name, Diana, meaning Great Huntress was chosen, and the following officers were elected: Anna Kearney, Oracle; Sarah Morse, Vice Oracle; Ella Boosinger, Recorder; Mrs. J. D. Brock, Receiver.

The charter members of this camp were: Horace Crihfield, Mrs. J. D. Brock, Ella Boosinger, A. L. Moorehead, Etta R. Snyder, D. H. Rhodes, Mrs. D. H. Rhodes, T. B. Reeves, Mrs. A. Fiddler, Ed Fiddler, Jennie Vance, Hallie Vance, Philip Vance, W. W. Richmond, Alice Higgins, Helen Kinser, William Kinser, James Williams, Zora Dagley, Nora Campbell, Anna Kearney, F. S. Storrs, Sarah E. Morse, Theodore Reeves, Mollie Corthon, D. G. Corthon, T. N. Hamilton, Mrs. Lillie Hamilton, C. A. Jones, Mrs. C. A. Jones, B. I. Pumpelly, J. T. Webster, J. M. Gaines, James Snyder, Mrs. J. T. Webster, Hattie Foley, James Dagley, Lieffie A. Weaver.

#### **INDEPENDENT ORDER OF GOOD TEMPLARS**

Prairie Gem Lodge, Independent Order of Good Templars No. 265, was organized during the month of March, 1856, by L. L. Bond, of Chicago, G. W. S. of the State of Illinois. The first officers were S. B. Dugger, Miss M. J. O'Brien, H. A. Angell, G. A. Colton, Mrs. Julia Burritt, A. H. Forrest, A. B. Barron, C. H. Strathman, J. V. McGahan, Mrs. Sarah Lewis, Mrs. C. M. Dugger, H. A. Clow, James Shores and J. Q. A. Lewis. Meetings were discontinued in 1869.

March 2, 1896, the Good Templars Lodge was again organized and for sometime was a flourishing order. The following officers were elected and installed by W. H. Neel, Deputy: C. T., Mr. Smith; V. T., Miss Nora

Martin; secretary, Miss Hattie Slack; F. S., D. D. Throop; treasurer, Miss Hattie Mason; S. J., Mrs. Wikle; P. C. T., Prof. A. S. Patterson; M., Lewis Holt; G., Eugene Steinaker; Sent., E. Langdon; Chap., Mr. Scott; A. S., Rev. E. J. Thomas; D. M., Miss Alice Stratton.

During this period, the W. C. T. U. flourished in Atlanta, and each member of the Good Templars Lodge took a temperance pledge, even to the extent of promising to abstain from drinking sweet cider.

#### **CENTRAL LODGE No. 111, ANCIENT ORDER OF UNITED WORKMEN**

Central Lodge No. 111, A. O. U. W., was organized March 25, 1878. The first officers were J. C. Cole, Past Master Workman; S. B. James, Master Workman; A. J. McLain, F.; Alfred Turner, O.; W. H. Mason, Recorder; C. H. Turner, Financier; A. J. Reise, Receiver; M. L. Higgins, G.; W. H. McGahan, I. W.; George Hoerr, O. W.

#### **ATLANTA LODGE No. 108, INDEPENDENT ORDER OF MUTUAL AID**

Atlanta Lodge No. 108, I. O. M. A., an insurance and fraternal order, was organized January 13, 1881, with sixty-six members.

#### **ACME LODGE No. 332, KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS**

Acme Lodge No. 332, Knights of Pythias of Atlanta, Illinois, was instituted February 11, 1892. The first officers of the lodge were: C. C., Chas. W. O'Connell; V. C., James H. Jones; Prelate, Oscar Hoose; Treasurer, Levi Coons; Finance Secretary, John Ward; Secretary, Charles Holder; M. A., Henry Dillon; I. G., George Maus; O. G., Robert McIntyre.

The Lodge was instituted with twenty-nine members and had a peak membership of one hundred members in 1910. The organization became inactive in 1937.

#### **ATLANTA TEMPLE No. 241, PYTHIAN SISTERS**

Atlanta Temple, No. 241, Pythian Sisters was instituted March 16, 1914. The first officers were: Past Chief, Emma Mason; Most Excellent Chief, Bessie Bevan; Excellent Senior, Fern Crandall; Excellent Junior, Ada Cheatham; Manager, Dell Hoose; Mistress of Records and Correspondence, Leiffie Weaver; Mistress of Finance, Cora B. Hitchell; Protector, Katherine Dreher; Guard, Gertrude Kurth.

The organization is no longer active.

#### **CHICKASAW TRIBE No. 277, IMPROVED ORDER OF RED MEN**

Chickasaw Tribe No. 277, I. O. R. M., was organized in 1906 with 35 charter members, and was in existence about ten years. A Council of the

Daughters of Pocahontas was organized in 1914 and remained active for about three years.

### **ANTI-THIEF SOCIETY**

The Anti-Thief Society was organized in 1854, designed to protect members and residents about town against all kinds of thieving. In 1869, the laws of the society were revised and printed and more members were added until the number reached 103. At that date, they had reported 39 horses and mules returned to their owners, out of 42 stolen, and a vast amount of merchandise had also been recovered. Sixteen thieves had been apprehended. The officers of the society at an early time were John E. Hoblit, president; S. H. Fields, vice-president; Frank Hoblit, treasurer and secretary; Smith Stroud, captain, and Abel Larison, lieutenant. The existence of this society, its mode of decisive action and determination to find the outlaw was one of the strongest safeguards the city of Atlanta possessed.

### **GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC**

Atlanta Post No. 326, G. A. R., was mustered August 27, 1883, with thirty-nine members and the following officers: Commander, F. J. Fields; senior vice commander, H. C. Hawes; junior vice commander, Daniel Gardner; quartermaster, A. P. West; chaplain, John Wikel; surgeon, W. T. Kirk; officer of the day, J. W. Spindler; officer of the guard, James Lambert; adjutant, James Ladew; sergeant major, A. W. Chenoweth; quartermaster's sergeant, W. L. James.

The Post was active during the ensuing years, until death took its toll of the veterans. The last member of the Post was Henry C. Hawes, who passed away August 15, 1931.

An active organization connected with the G. A. R. Post and auxiliary thereto was the Woman's Relief Corps.

### **KU KLUX KLAN**

Atlanta also had its Ku Klux Klan. Organized in 1919, it is said to have had a membership numbering almost two hundred. At a joint revival meeting of the Christian, Methodist and Baptist churches in Atlanta, the Klan made a public presentation of \$300 to be divided equally among the three churches.

## HOTELS IN ATLANTA

The rapid early growth of Atlanta brought many persons to town who were without means of private board and lodging, and the hotel business attracted some of the early arrivals as promising lucrative returns. By June, 1856, three hotels were listed in S. B. Duggers directory of Atlanta. Perhaps the first was the Layton House on North Railroad street. Part of this place is still standing and is the home of Mrs. Theodore Williams. John Layton was an uncle of Mrs. Mattie Clay and Mrs. Ann Bowers, of Atlanta. In 1856, James M. Cantrall was listed as the proprietor of this hotel.

A hotel at the corner of Vine and Railroad streets, known as the Atlanta House, was built in 1855, but was destroyed by fire in 1857. Later it was rebuilt and for many years was one of Atlanta's leading hotels. Older citizens will remember it under the nickname of "The Blue Goose."

The Logan House was a four-story structure at the corner of Vine and Church streets (now a vacant lot one block east of the Logan-Mason service station). During the first days of Atlanta, Elza Dunagan built a two-story boarding house on this site. In 1856, A. G. Colton purchased the property and added two stories to the building. It was known as the Logan House for many years, but the name was changed to the Grant House by Ed Newman, who was the proprietor for a long time. It burned August 27, 1889. This hotel at one time was considered the best in Atlanta, but at the time of its burning the building had become almost a complete wreck.

The Coleman House, under the management of David L. Coleman, was Atlanta's leading hotel during the 1880's and into the early years of the twentieth century. Located at the corner of Vine and Arch streets (now the site of the Logan-Mason service station) the Coleman House was the scene of many social events and gatherings, as well as being popular with the traveling public. With changing conditions, the hotel business in Atlanta became less lucrative, and owners succeeding the Colemans met with poor success. The property was finally sold to Acme Lodge, Knights of Pythias, of Atlanta. The Lodge contemplated the building of a three-story brick building, but the project did not materialize. The Stemen building, just north of the site of the former hotel, is a part of the old Coleman House.

At the present time, Atlanta's only hotel is operated by Mrs. Helen Bates on Railroad street.





Atlanta's First Hotel

### THE OLD HOTEL

There's a house in town  
 With a history;  
 It's the old hotel  
 By the cottonwood tree.

'Twas a famous place  
 In the long ago—  
 Jim Currence says,  
 And he ought to know.

Who its builders were  
 I quite forget;  
 I know they're gone,  
 And the inn's there yet.

A long flat building  
 The roof slopes down;  
 Its boarded walls  
 Are painted brown.

And at one corner  
 If you notice well,  
 You can trace the name  
 Of the old hotel.

Around the fireplace  
 The boarders sat,  
 And passed the evenings  
 In social chat.

But all these things  
 Have passed away;  
 And the old hotel  
 Has had its day.

Now this relic old  
 You can daily see,  
 Still standing there  
 By the cottonwood tree.

— JAMES HART



The Atlanta House



The Coleman House

## **BANKING IN ATLANTA**

The banking house of T. N. Gill & Co., was the first bank organized in Atlanta and probably in Logan Co. It opened for business in the spring of 1854. This firm was succeeded by David Kern & Co. and was in turn followed by Dills, Kern & Co., who conducted the business until 1866, when it passed into the hands of the Hoblit brothers. In 1875, the Hoblits changed their bank to a National Bank under the name of The First National Bank of Atlanta, conducting it as such until 1879, when it again became a private institution, known as the Atlanta Bank. It was located where Judge Frank S. Bevan now has his office.

### **THE ATLANTA NATIONAL BANK**

The Atlanta National Bank was organized in 1877 with Samuel H. Fields as president; William S. Dunham as vice-president, J. P. Hieronymus, as cashier, and the following directors: Augustus Reise, William S. Dunham, J. P. Hieronymus, A. P. West, William Gambrel and H. C. Quisenberry. The bank occupied the rooms now owned and used by Judge Frank S. Bevan as his Atlanta office, until 1916, when the building which it now occupies was acquired.

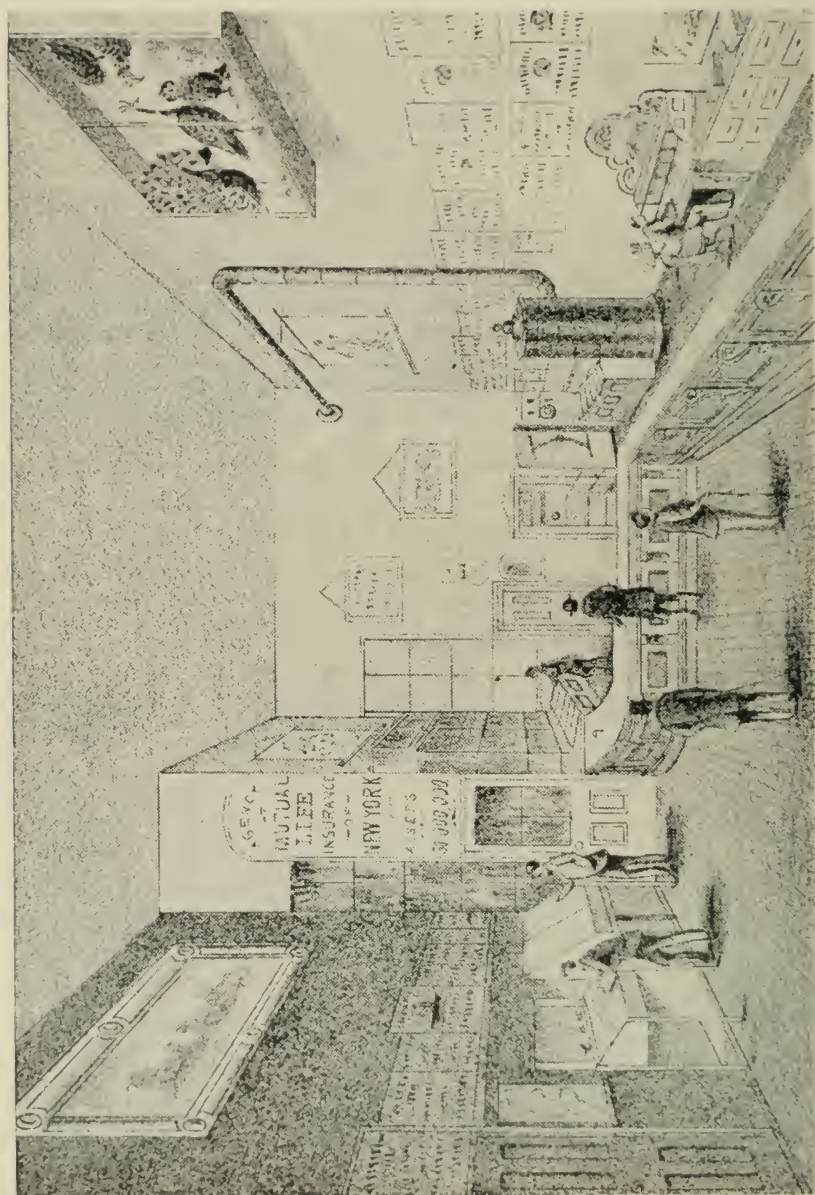
The bank is capitalized for \$50,000, and its report as of December 31, 1952 showed a surplus of \$50,000 and undivided profits of \$50,447.46. Deposits totaled \$2,474,000.

On two occasions, the bank has been the victim of attempted daylight robberies. The first, on October 10, 1931, was thwarted when one of the robbers mistook his own image in the mirror of the safe deposit vault for that of a bank employe and shot, shattering the mirror. The robbers then fled without securing any of the bank's funds. On June 29, 1932, the bank was held up again, and the robbers made off with \$4,386.33 and were never apprehended. Since that time, bullet proof glass and other safety devices have been installed to guard against robbery.

### **THE PEOPLE'S BANK**

The People's Bank was organized October 6, 1887 as a general partnership with the following officers and directors: George W. Funk, president; P. R. Marquart, vice-president; C. H. Turner, cashier; Ed. Stubblefield, J. L. Bevan, John H. Burt, C. T. Rock, P. R. Marquart and C. H. Turner, directors. The bank was located in the two-story brick structure which it built at the corner of Arch and Vine streets. The capital stock was \$40,000. In 1921, in order to conform to the new banking laws, the bank was reorganized, under the name of Peoples Bank of Atlanta, and the capital was increased to \$50,000. In 1950, the directors of the bank decided that, although the affairs of the bank were in a healthy condition, circumstances were such that a liquidation of its assets was advisable. Deposits were not accepted after June 30, and on July 29, 1950, the stockholders voted approval of the directors' action. Depositors were paid in full, and with the final dividend to stockholders in June, 1951, the Peoples Bank ceased to exist after an honorable record of nearly 64 years.





Exchange Bank of Frank Hoblit and Bros.



## ATLANTA CEMETERY

The Atlanta Cemetery was established in 1857, four years after the incorporation of the town. The first land secured for use as a cemetery was bought from Harvey Turner and his wife and deeded to "David Kern, president; Ira A. Church, John A. Drooley, James Shores, A. N. Martin and R. H. Killin, Trustees of the town of Atlanta, and their successors in Office." This land was a portion of the tract which Harvey Turner entered on the 20th of October, 1835, and for which he received his patent, the deed from the United States, on the 1st of November, 1839. Additional land has been purchased as the need arose.

At the close of the Civil War, a large monument was erected in the cemetery to honor the soldiers who fought and died during the war. A large mounted cannon and a mound of cannon balls was placed near the base of this monument. For many years the Atlanta Band followed by a long train of citizens, marched to the cemetery and held memorial services on this lot. These services consisted mostly of patriotic speeches by members of the G. A. R., after which a cannon was fired and flags were placed on all the veterans' graves on Memorial Day. The flags are still placed on all soldiers' graves, though the services are no longer held.

The Ladies' Cemetery Association of Atlanta was organized January 5, 1900, and a charter was granted to the Association, the incorporators being Lucy M. Church, Hattie A. Medberry and Emma Onstott. Their purpose was to form an association to take charge of the management and care of the cemetery. The association met January 18, and elected the following officers: President, Mrs. Margaret Randolph; vice-president, Mrs. Addie Long; secretary, Mrs. Mary M. Mix; treasurer, Mrs. Elizabeth Dunham; directors, Mrs. May McKinnon, Mrs. Emma Onstott, Mrs. Mary Dalzell, Mrs. Lucy Church, Mrs. Ella Turner, Mrs. Mina Rowan and Mrs. Hattie Medberry. A committee, consisting of Mrs. Adeline Long, chairman, Hattie Medberry, Mary Dalzell, Ida McKinnon and May Dunham drafted a constitution and by-laws, which were presented for adoption at a meeting held February 15. On February 22, the association met at the home of Mrs. Rathbone, at which meeting the constitution and by-laws were signed.

The City of Atlanta deeded its cemetery to the association which has, since its organization, cared for and controlled the property intrusted to it. Previous to the time when the association accepted this responsibility, the individual lot owners cared for their lots or employed a man by the season to care for them. Under this system there were many neglected lots. The Cemetery Association accepted responsibility for the care of a lot for \$1.50 per year, or pledged perpetual maintenance of a lot for the payment of a \$50 trust fund. For the first sexton, James Larison was engaged, who gave his entire attention to the care of the grounds. The cemetery was soon cleared of all grass and rubbish and all streets and alleys were kept mown. The Association has always striven to keep the grounds in the best of condition and today Atlanta has one of the prettiest cemeteries anywhere.

The fees from lot owners able to pay, and the income from the trust

fund have not always been enough to pay all expenses. However, recent gifts to the Association have helped meet this need. In recent years, a gift of \$300 from Margaret Gordon Hoose, \$2,000 from Blanche Rock and a deed for 220 acres of land at Steele, Mo., by Clinton Martin, have been greatly appreciated. All lots that are sold now are sold with perpetual care.

On March 6, 1911, 2.58 acres of land by deed from Florence Shugart to the City of Atlanta were added to the property, and on July 2, 1929, 2,358 acres, known as the Morphis land were added.

The Atlanta Cemetery came under state supervision on January 1, 1948 by the passage of the Cemetery Care Act, passed by the state legislature in 1947.

Atlanta can truly be proud of her cemetery and the results of the interest and work of the Ladies' Cemetery Association.

## THE ATLANTA PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Atlanta Public Library was established in March, 1873, in accordance with the laws of Illinois. It stands as a monument to the public spirited citizens, who realized the need for books in this community and did something about it. James Shores was elected president of the first library board; S. D. Fisher, secretary, and Benjamin Bean, librarian pro tem. Other directors were Seth Turner, Dr. B. F. Gardner, Frank Hoblit, W. S. Dunham, J. B. Tenney and E. J. Thomas.

For several years, the front room of the printing office was used as a library, with George B. Shoals, editor of the Argus, as librarian. Other early librarians were Mrs. Shoals, John W. Spindler and Dr. M. Lee. In 1881, the first catalogue was printed, listing 1,500 books. In 1893, the library was moved to the old city hall, and Miss Alta Chenoweth served as librarian for fifteen years. Upon her resignation, Miss Harriet Hamilton was elected librarian. She was succeeded by Mrs. Eda B. Quisenberry, who served for thirteen years. On February 1, 1923, Mrs. Gail Haines was asked to serve while Mrs. Quisenberry was in the South for her health. On May 1, 1923 she was elected librarian and has served continuously since. Many fine young people have assisted in the library and gone forth to broader fields of service.

In 1907, more space was needed for books and for the many patrons who had to stand in line to receive them. Once more the public-spirited citizens did something about it. Seward Fields, a former citizen, donated the three lots which form the spacious grounds on which the library stands. With generous contributions from the public, among them a gift of \$4,000 from Mrs. Martha Harness Tuttle, the present building was



The Atlanta Public Library

erected at a cost of \$9,500. The building was dedicated on March 28, 1908, with a reception and book shower in the afternoon and a program in the evening at Murphy Hall.

In October, 1924, the Atlanta Woman's Club established a rental shelf of new fiction, a fee of 10 cents a week being charged for each book. This proved very popular. The initial gift was \$100. The annual silver teas of the club have netted \$409.14, and the rental fees have totaled \$1,024.20, a grand total of \$1,533.44, all of which was used for the purchase of new fiction. Forty books are kept on the rental shelf, and 1,300 have been transferred to the free library. Many patrons have given and loaned new books to the rental shelf.

The Junior Woman's Club is also a generous contributor to the li-



brary. Most of their gifts have been spent for children's and teen-age books.

A Memory Shelf was started in February, 1944 by G. Harry Tuttle, then president of the Library Board, in honor of the boys who lost their lives in World War II. He gave a book in memory of each boy. They were Eugene Hubner, John Purlee, Frederick Snow, Simon Wonderlin, Gerald Baker, Robert Sexton, Joseph Brandt, Russell Jones, Elon Gardner, A. Usherwood and James Williams. There is also a book honoring the memory of Hartford Larison and one for John B. King.

The Memory Shelf has grown rapidly into a section. Books come from all parts of the United States, honoring the memory of relatives and friends.

Two endowments were left to the library—from Seward H. Fields, \$3,000, and from Miss Alice Tuttle, \$1,000. Mrs. Lillian Harry willed the library \$1,000 at her death. Many fine books came to the library from their private libraries.

In February, 1948, the Atlanta Woman's Club and the Junior Woman's Club sponsored a redecoration project of the library. They were joined by the Parent-Teacher's Association, the Atlanta Rotary Club and many private citizens. A complete restoration was carried out, the library being closed for one month.

The library contains approximately 11,000 books, and the circulation of books and magazines is steady.

A memorial gift to the library consists of three pictures of Abraham Lincoln over the fireplace, with a placard below reading: "From a collection of Mrs. Anna Strong Forgy, whose grandfather Sylvester Strong, was a warm personal friend of Abraham Lincoln, and at whose home Lincoln visited on his trips on the old 8th Circuit. Given by her son, Clinton D. McWhenney."

The library also has a large lithograph of New Salem, home of Lincoln from 1831 to 1839. This was published by R. J. Onstott, and one of the cabins is the old Onstott home. Many volumes of Lincoln history and biography are on the shelves.

The large silk flag of Atlanta Post, Grand Army of the Republic is in the library, left there by Henry C. Hawes, the last Civil War veteran in Atlanta.

Some years ago, James O'Donnell Bennett, Chicago Tribune writer, wrote a series of articles on Chicagoland within a radius of 250 miles. One article was devoted to the Atlanta Library, at which he was amazed. He called it Atlanta University, and closed with these words: "So I call Atlanta a most stimulating and illuminating specimen of the goodly Chicagoland and the moral is, that what can be done in Atlanta, can be done anywhere."



## THE ATLANTA FAIR

The Atlanta Union Central Agricultural Society was organized in 1860 and incorporated by special act of the legislature in 1861. A. N. Dills, A. C. Barnes, Joseph Bell, Isham Atchison, G. N. Bryson, Ezra T. Kenyon, J. E. Hoblit, Alex Downey, P. R. Marquart, J. A. Pitts, A. J. Ludlam and Ellis Dillon acted for the society as incorporators.

The early settlers saw the advantages arising from breeding a high grade of stock and cultivating the more productive and improved varieties of grain and fruit. They wisely thought an agricultural society would be one of the best means to promote this end.

From its inception, the idea was to conduct a union fair at Atlanta for the four counties of Logan, McLean, DeWitt and Tazewell, since Atlanta occupied a strategic position geographically and historically as to the four counties.

Early in 1860, it was decided to organize a fair association as a stock company, the stock to be \$20 per share, 20% of the face value to be paid down, 30% when called for, and the balance of 50% in one year. In a short time the sum of \$4,000 was subscribed. April 2, 1860, a meeting was called. Samuel Hoblit was selected as chairman and S. D. Fisher as secretary.

A subsequent meeting was held April 20, 1860 at which the Atlanta Union Central Agricultural Society was formally organized by the election of the following officers: President, A. W. Morgan; vice-presidents, Isham Atchison and Samuel Hoblit; directors, A. N. Dills, A. D. Downey, Sylvester Strong, Jonathan Merriam, Joseph Pitts, R. W. Burt and A. C. Barnes. It was also decided to purchase ground and hold the first fair the coming October.

The land purchased from John E. Hoblit consisted of 18 acres of rolling prairie within the town plat and adjoining on the south, for which the society was to pay \$65 per acre. (To this original site, the society later added some 18 acres more.) The site having been purchased, the 18 acres were enclosed by an eight-foot high board fence and within this enclosure the first fair was held October 9, 10, 11 and 12, 1860. The Atlanta Union Central Agricultural Society obtained its charter February 15, 1861 from the General Assembly of 1860-61.

At the end of a quarter of a century, we read from "History of Logan County" published in 1886:

"Few societies in the state can boast a finer grounds. During these many years, groves of native and evergreen trees have been carefully cultivated and now groups of beautiful shade trees are scattered over the grounds. An abundance of water is obtained from wells. The buildings are convenient, commodious and handsome. Long lines of roomy stalls for horses and cattle, a large number of comfortable pens of hogs and

sheep, a substantial machinery hall, an extensive dining room, a large semi-circular covered amphitheatre, capable of seating several thousand persons, a tasty and ornamental band stand, and an elegant new floral hall for the exhibition of farm and garden products, fruits, canned goods, fancy work, art displays, etc., all attest that the directors carefully studied the interests of exhibitors and visitors alike. A circular race track, facing the amphitheatre, is laid out in the east part of the grounds. A fair has been held every year with the exception of 1862, when the Civil war absorbed every interest.

"It must not for a moment be supposed that all has been clear sailing, and that their meetings have been a series of uninterrupted successes. Like all similar organizations, it has had its ups and downs, its bright and gloomy sides, but it has been especially fortunate in having a set of warm supporters, who were neither willing to give up its life nor sacrifice its honor, and this one has succeeded in riding every storm and has paid its debts, dollar for dollar. At one time, its debts amounted to \$2,700, and the directors were compelled to pledge their private obligations to secure them. At this date, it stands free of debt with a surplus of \$1,500 in the treasury.

"The display of horses, hogs, cattle, and sheep is unusually good. Liberal premiums are offered and closely contended for. This annual display of fine stock has led to the constant improvements of the breeds, and has earned for this section of the country an enviable reputation in cattle, horses, hogs and sheep. Few finer rings of draft horses can be seen anywhere than at this fair, and the show of the grade and thoroughbred cattle is superior.

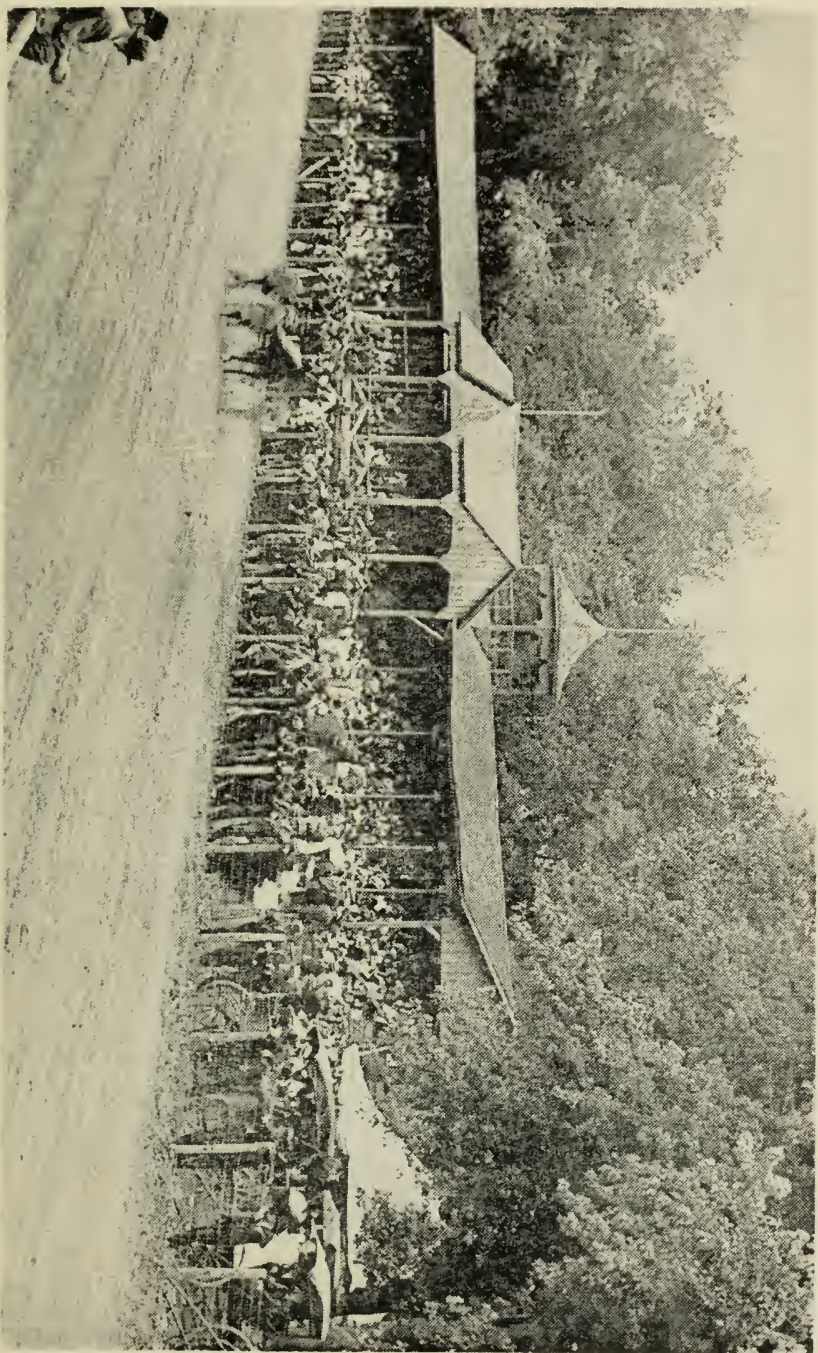
"In the halls, the ladies vie with each other in canned fruits, breads, cakes, fancy and useful articles, and the farmers in all the varied productions of farm and garden.

"It has been the intention of the managers to make this a stock and agricultural fair, and they have offered little encouragement to racing. Their is a good track where some trials of speed are made, but no large purses are offered or special efforts put forth to make this a leading feature. Gambling devices of every kind are frowned upon, the sale of all kinds of liquor is strictly prohibited, and every effort put forth to maintain a high moral standard.

"A list of premiums offered is annually published and distributed throughout the country. It is carefully revised each year, and such changes made as experience and the times demand. Since its organization, there has been paid out through the various channels of the society, \$85,836.14.

"Authority is granted by the constitution to establish an institution of learning in connection with the society, the object of such an institution to introduce a course of a more thorough instruction in those branches of science that more directly concern an agricultural community, as well





The Fairgrounds Amphitheater

as the arts and sciences, and in connection with it to conduct a farm for experimental purposes. Up to the present time, the society has never followed out this provision."

The first annual gathering of the "Old Settlers Union" was held by invitation with the Agricultural Board at the fair grounds September 7, 1880. All residents of the four counties, who had lived in Illinois forty years, were eligible for membership. Silk badges were presented, blue for those who had lived in Illinois fifty years, red for those who had lived in the state forty years. The society gave them the use of a pleasant grove, known as "Old Settlers Grove," for holding their annual meetings and accompanying exercises. In 1881, they decided to erect a "monumental log cabin" in their grove, each member being allowed to contribute one log or piece toward the building. The building was erected August 16, 1881, a substantial log cabin, 18 by 20 feet. The pioneers also in 1882 erected a small cabin of unhewn logs, using neither nail nor modern device in its construction, this as a monument to the "Snow Birds" or pioneers, who had settled previously to the big snow of 1830-31.

From the Atlanta Argus of August 30, 1910:

"It is hard to realize the Atlanta Fair has completed half a century of existence. Such a record is unique among county fairs, the average life of which is 25 years.

"A considerable number there are who have attended every fair ever given by the society. There were 54 registered who had attended the first fair.

"One of the most striking evidences that a new generation has sprung up to take the place of the early pioneers is the fact that yesterday for the first time in thirty years, the first day of the fair was not celebrated as Old Settlers Day.

"Of the original incorporators of the association, not one is living. Of the officers and directors, only one survives.

"Tuesday started with the biggest first day in the history of the association, receipts of \$1,700 eclipsing last year's totals which were considered a record breaker.

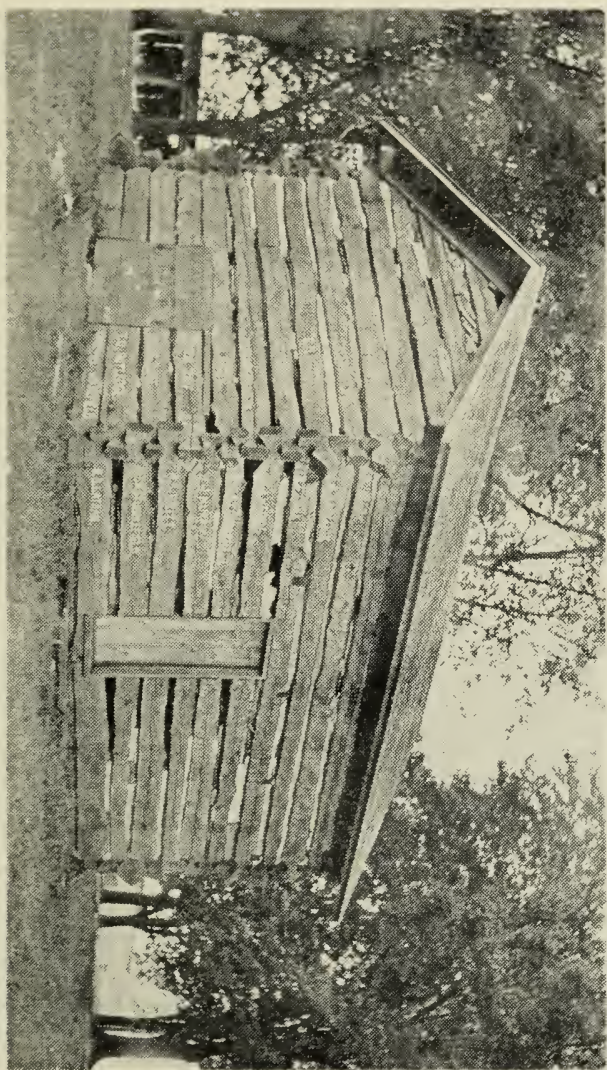
"The Homecoming feature doubtless attracted many. Taken altogether, it was such a success it will doubtless remain a permanent feature of the Atlanta Fair.

"Wednesday was Automobile Day. Many autos were on the grounds, and it was planned to get all machines on the track and parade, but it was impossible to get the owners to take part.

"Also a new feature was the judging of a herd of six dairy cattle by teams of three boys from the four counties."

The fair grounds were used for many and varied programs through the years. The colored citizens of Atlanta and vicinity celebrated the twelfth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation Wednesday, Sep-





Log Cabin At The Atlanta Fairgrounds

tember 22, 1875 and had a grand old-style barbecue to which everyone was invited. Hon. Shelby M. Cullom delivered the main address, with Rogers' Brass Band of Springfield furnishing the music. The C. & A. Railroad carried passengers for one fair and one-fifth. Illinois Midland Railroad carried passengers from Decatur and Peoria to Atlanta and return for one-half fare.

Many big political rallies were held on the grounds. In 1908, Gov. Yates was the speaker, with a barbecue as a feature of the day. Eleven beeves, averaging 850 pounds dressed, were cooked by steam by a steam engine forced into a specially erected building.

Fraternal orders held all-day meetings, with programs, drills and basket dinners the attractions.

During Music Week of May, 1926, the grade schools put on an operetta, "Fairy Queen," before a packed amphitheatre.

From a Fair Book of 1928, in a foreword, "To The People," we read:

"In presenting our 68th annual premium list to our friends and patrons, the management renews its pledge for a clean fair in every respect, and invites the people to come, bring their families and dinners, meet and mingle with their neighbors and friends under pleasurable and unobjectionable surroundings, see the many interesting exhibitions, and enjoy themselves generally. Our motto: 'A Bigger and Better Fair,' is still in force.

"When the present board of directors took over the management of the fair, the association was \$9,500 in debt. This debt has been reduced to \$6,500, with all interest paid, and all obligations paid in full. Besides that, the grandstand has been built at a total cost of \$2,800, the ground wired for electricity at a cost of several hundred dollars, the barns have been repainted, the grounds have been tiled, and many other improvements made, and all this during a period when the agricultural situation surrounding us has been in a state of depression. In view of the above facts, we believe that with improved conditions and with the general help and boosting of our citizens, the debt can soon be lifted."

The weather for 1928 seemed ideal and attendance was very good. Yet at the close of the fair, the management was unable to pay all their premiums by \$1,650, which was advanced by friends to make payments in full. It was decided, therefore, to sell all property and clear the indebtedness. On January 20, 1930, the real estate was sold to the People's Bank for \$6,384.50 and the buildings to individuals for \$2,367.95. This was sufficient to pay all indebtedness of the society if the \$1,650 be not considered as indebtedness.

This sale constituted the last gesture of this time honored organization, and not a few present breathed a sigh of regret as they saw the property pass into other hands and realized the Atlanta Union Central Agricultural Association was no more.

## ATLANTA SCHOOLS

The citizens of Atlanta have always prided themselves upon the progressiveness of their public schools. No pains have been spared to keep them up to a standard of the highest excellence, and from the inception of the city in 1853, the Atlanta schools, in point of efficiency, have not been excelled in the county. In 1853, the first school building in Atlanta, called the Seminary, was erected on the southwest corner of the present school site. It was chartered in 1855 and was non-denominational. The first board of trustees was Samuel Bevan, Lemuel Foster, James Tuttle, A. C. Rankin and R. T. Gill.

The charter conferred upon the trustees full power to confer Academic degrees, to regulate the course of study, to appoint teachers, make by-laws, to erect additional buildings and to purchase grounds not to exceed ten acres. Upon the approval of the stockholders, the trustees had the power to convert the school into a high school, which was later done. The stock was twenty dollars per share, each share being entitled to one vote. Stockholders were liable to a tax of one dollar on each share.

In may, 1856, there were 137 enrolled. There were three departments in the school: primary, intermediate and high. In addition to Reading, Writing and Spelling, there were five classes in Arithmetic, two in Algebra, three in Geography, one in Philosophy, one in Latin and one in History.

Atlanta was incorporated as a city in 1869, and the schools were reorganized under the state school law as graded schools of the city. The district was enlarged to include one mile each way from town, and a board of directors was elected to assume entire control of the schools. In 1870, the old Seminary building was found inadequate for the accommodation of the school population, and measures were taken to erect a larger building. The old building was removed to the corner of the lot and used until the new one was completed when it was moved to the farm of Augustus Reise, now the Dunham farm at the west edge of Atlanta.

The building erected in 1870 was three stories in height above the basement and contained ten school rooms, a spacious hall and an office. It was surmounted by a cupola, in which a large four-dialed clock was placed. The clock cost \$800 and the sum was raised by contributions. The contract price of the building was \$24,485, to which \$500 was added afterwards. The entire cost of the building, clock and furnishings was \$28,500.

This building was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1908. Undaunted by this disaster, a structure was erected in its stead, which not only far surpassed its predecessor, but was one of the largest and best equipped



buildings in the state. It is two stories high and constructed of vitrified brick with stone trimmings and a slate roof, the brick being of a dark chocolate color. The contract price of the edifice was about \$40,000, and the additional expense of plumbing and furnishings increased the cost to within the neighborhood of \$60,000. Few cities of the size of Atlanta in the state could boast of so magnificent a school building at that time. School was first opened in the new building September 6, 1909.

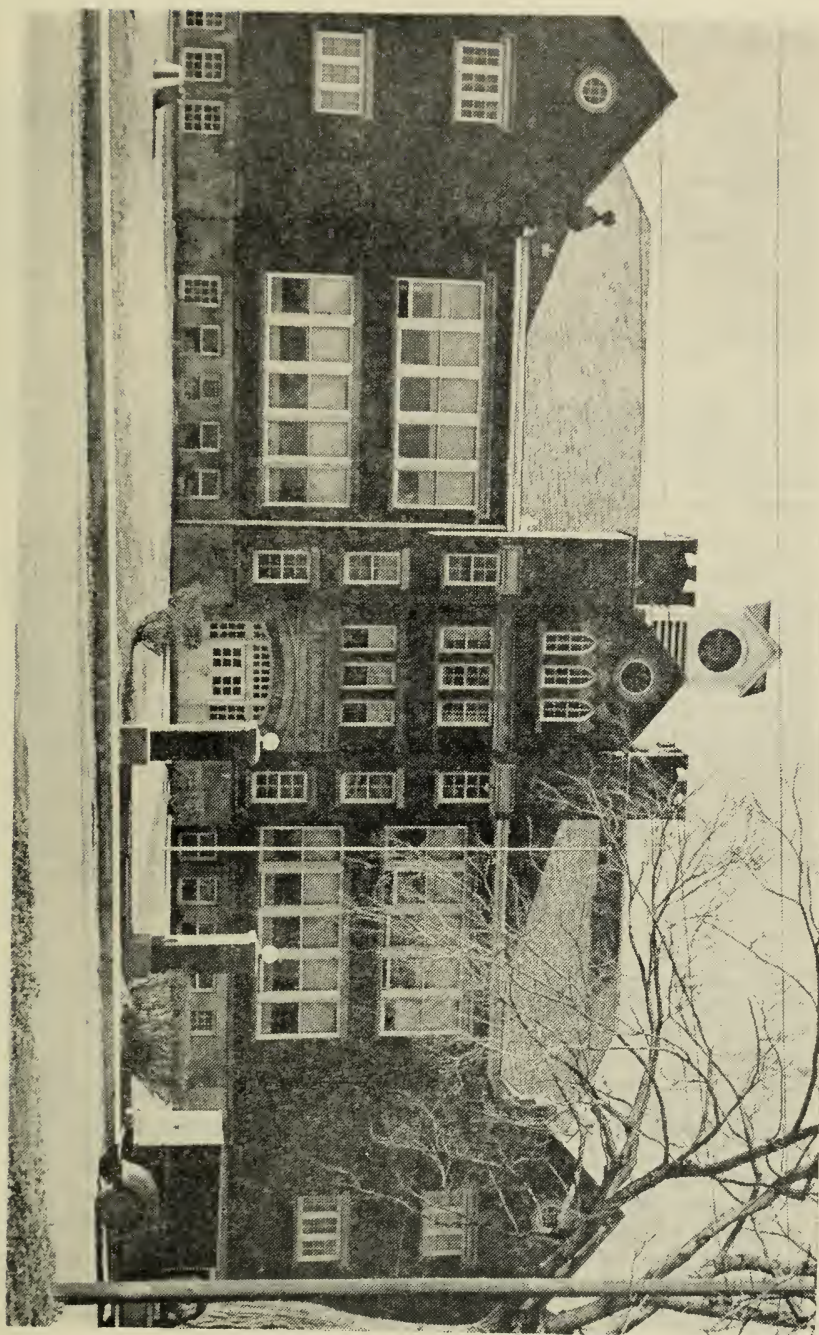
In 1919, it was decided to incorporate more of the territory around Atlanta into a separate high school district. This district, No. 401, was organized on August 2, 1919 and comprised 35½ sections in Atlanta and Eminence townships. It was the first community high school district organized in Logan County. Thus in the fall of 1920, Atlanta Community



The Old School Building



The Present School Building



High School opened for the first time. The first board of education included Dr. Maskel Lee, O. E. Johnson, James I. McKown, Ray E. Thompson and Fred S. Zollars.

The school continued to operate in the grade school building and rented space from District No. 301 until November, 1935. In that year, an election was held to select, purchase a site and build an addition to the high school. It was agreed that the High School would build the new addition: three classrooms and combination auditorium and gymnasium. This was done with the assistance of WPA labor and a \$15,000 grant from the government. The total cost was about \$40,000. Henceforth, the whole building and all real estate was the property of both districts, 301 and 401, with both sharing in the cost of maintenance. The new building was dedicated on Nov. 13, 1936.

Prior to the building of this addition, it was necessary to use the facilities of Murphy Hall for plays, basketball games and year-end activities. It was a distinct asset to have these rooms attached to the building with showers and dressing rooms at hand. Running to the City Hall for a quick shower was no longer necessary for the basketball boys.

Additions to the school property include the acquisition of an excellent athletic field, two blocks north of the schoolhouse in 1940. In 1946, the school purchased the west half of the block, north of the school, for the purpose of creating an all weather playground. The street between the two blocks was closed to give added space and safety. A dwelling adjacent to the school was purchased in 1949 for use of the school superintendent. Additions and changes to the building to make possible a luncheon program were made in 1951. The old gymnasium floor was raised to the level of the adjoining halls and the room converted into a cafeteria. The kitchens were installed in the old Home Economics room. The last addition to the school system was a bus garage, which was completed in May, 1951, to the north of the main building and east of the playground. This houses the five buses which transport the students to and from school to their homes and to school activities out of town.

In 1947, it seemed expedient to consolidate the grade schools in the district and surrounding area. An election was held May 23 of that year, and the following grade schools were incorporated into District No. 301: District 23, Clear Creek; District 24, New Castle; District 25, Hoblit; District 301, Atlanta Grade; District 53, Rose Hill; District 55, Walnut Row; District 56, Eminence; District 58, Hazel Dell. That fall three buses were purchased to transport students to the school building in town.

A law was passed by the state legislature on July 1, 1947 for the creation of Unit School Districts, so the Atlanta school districts were again reorganized and Unit 20 was created on December 11, 1948. This combined Districts 301 and 401, plus some other territory, principally in Eminence and Oran townships. The new Unit School was set up to be operated by a seven-man board, which was as follows: L. H. Dunham,

president; DeWitt Yeast, secretary; R. L. Ijams, V. B. Bateman, Paul Gordon, J. Neil Rice and John A. Hoblit.

The first free private school for handicapped children in Logan County was set up in Atlanta in the fall of 1927 and was operated as a part of the school system. The school was conducted in a regulation school room, set up in the homes. The school was discontinued in 1935. In 1933, the students of the private school edited a school paper, containing notes and news about the High School. This paper was taken over later by high school student body and has since been published as the Spotlight.

The class of 1919 published the school's first year book, entitled Atlanta High School. In 1922, under the direction of Bertha Bridges, Principal of the High School, the first Atlanta was issued by the Senior Class. Since that time, the Senior Class of each year has published an annual, containing news and pictures of the school, with records of the activities of the year, as well as a listing of the Alumni at intervals.

Atlanta has always held her own in athletics, especially good records having been made in football and track in the earlier years. Probably the most impressive record in Atlanta school athletic history was made by the track teams in the Corn Belt Athletic meets in the early years of the century. Competing against Springfield, Decatur, Bloomington, Lincoln and other large high schools, Atlanta won meets and set records in individual events which were never broken during the existence of the Corn Belt association. During the last few years, the main sports have been basketball and baseball. These sports are well supported by the Pep Club and the citizens of the community.

Through the years, an interest has been taken in dramatics and the literary field. Various organizations sponsored these activities, the most active having been the Literary Adelphi and Belles Lettres societies, both of which ceased to exist in 1922. Debating, Declamation and Oratorical contests were entered and many honors won. The Atlanta High School won more oratorical prizes at the various meets of the Corn Belt Oratorical Association than any other school in the association. The late William Kephart also won first place at the state oratorical contest at Urbana in 1902.

In music the schools always have ranked high. In 1921-22, Prof. H. O. Merry was hired to instruct the students in instrumental music, and he was followed by instructors, who maintained the high standards which he set. Miss Adelle McClure was engaged in 1923 to direct vocal in both the grade and high schools. Over the years, Atlanta school musicians have been highly successful in winning awards in district and state contests.

The Girls Athletic Association of Atlanta High School was organized during the year of 1947-48. Prior to that time there was no full time girls physical education instructor, though there had been an organization



for one year under the direction of Miss Kimball in 1939-40. Each year the club selects one of its members to receive the Sportsmanship Award. This trophy is on display in the school trophy case.

It is worthy of note that Atlanta has been able to produce so many of her own teachers. Many of them have graduated from the school, gone elsewhere for additional training and then returned to help educate their hometown children. Notable in this list are the late Miss Minnie Nollen, who spent fifty years instructing the beginners, and Miss Cora Carlock, who is finishing her 42nd year in the system this year. Many others have enviable records in their faithful and loving service to the school.

### **FUTURE HOMEMAKERS OF AMERICA**

The Atlanta Chapter of the Future Homemakers of America was organized in 1945 and was affiliated with the state and national organizations on October 29, 1945, with 41 members. The first officers were: Jean Hout, president; Wilma Baldwin, vice-president; Dorothy Larson, secretary; Marilyn Brandt, treasurer; Joan Wiseman, historian; Wilma Baldwin, song leader; Gilberta Gordon, club reporter; Melba Miller, chairman of scrap book; Mrs. H. L. Wiseman, chapter mother; Miss Marian Ioder, chapter adviser.

### **FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA**

The present charter was granted to Atlanta Chapter, Future Farmers of America, on April 23, 1947. Twenty-six members were enrolled. The officers for 1946-47 were: Eugene Craft, president; Harold Brooks, vice-president; John Horn, secretary; Duane Quisenberry, treasurer; Vaughn Craft, reporter. Brian Grant was the chapter adviser.

### **ATLANTA PARENT-TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

The Atlanta Patron Teachers Association was founded on December 13, 1918, with a view toward promoting a better understanding between the teachers and the community. Mrs. H. W. McClure was the first president. Included in the membership were many patrons who were neither teachers nor parents of pupils. "Cooperation" was adopted as its slogan, and for 36 years, it has been guided by that principle, both within the organization and in its relationship with other community organizations.

Recognition of teachers' faithful service and a sympathetic understanding of teachers' problems rank high among its objectives. Credit must be given the Association for making Atlanta school conscious. By being attuned to the needs of the school, it has in no small way helped develop the excellent reputation which our schools have enjoyed through the years.

In 1928, the Association joined the Federation and was chartered the Atlanta Parent-Teacher Association. It is now a member of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, with a membership of over 7,000,000—the largest organization in the world, whose sole purpose is for the best interest of children.

The following show some of the local accomplishments: purchased encyclopedia, reference and World Books, music and records, band uniforms, new piano, record player, public address system, playground equipment and repairs, scales, dishes, Christmas treats, attendance trophies, basketball suits, furnished first aid room, immunization, health measures, individually and for the entire school. Donations have been made to each room, the polio fund, Girl Scouts, Atlanta Public Library for redecorating and Red Cross.

P. T. A. sponsored the first Homecoming, with its parades and suppers. Milk and cocoa were served the children before the Association launched the present hot lunch program. Delegates have been sent to the District and state conventions. Mothersinger groups have been organized. The community has enjoyed excellent programs at the monthly meetings.

Funds for these projects were obtained from carnivals, bazaars, suppers, a rummage sale and scrap drives, to which the community has always given its whole hearted cooperation.

The accomplishments of leaders and committees have overlapped through the years, so as to give a continuity of purpose to the organization: namely, the welfare of the child.

## THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

A meeting was held May 5, 1922 at the school building to form an Alumni Association of the Atlanta High School. Previous attempts at such an organization had failed. The group decided to hold an initial banquet on June 2, 1922 and form such an organization, and committees for the banquet were appointed. There was an attendance of 116 at the banquet, which was held at the Methodist church. Frank S. Bevan was chosen chairman and M. M. Hoose, secretary, of the organization meeting. Those present decided to hold a similar meeting each year, and the following officers were chosen to take care of all business and arrangements for the next year: President, Mrs. B. R. Hawley; vice-president, Mrs. Lida Hardie Miller; secretary-treasurer, P. A. Carihfield; corresponding secretary, Miss Eleanor Barnes. A membership fee of fifty cents per year was voted, and any graduate of the high school was eligible for membership. Credit for this successful banquet and meeting was given to Mrs. Hawley and her large force of assistants.

The banquet has been held each year since 1922. It has become the custom to pay special tribute to the 50-year graduates, as well as those who have been alumni for ten and twenty-five years. The annual banquet has become a homecoming occasion for graduates from far and near, for they are assured of meeting many friends and acquaintances of their schoolhood days.

## CHURCHES

### THE ATLANTA BAPTIST CHURCH

The Atlanta Baptist Church, the oldest continuous church organization in Logan County, was established in 1830, under the name of the Big Grove Baptist Church at the house of Hiram Bowman, its first pastor. It was situated in what was known as the Big Grove timber, on the Kickapoo Creek in what is now Atlanta Township. Michael Mann, another pioneer Baptist preacher, assisted in the organization. The original membership numbered fourteen, of which John Hoblit was chosen deacon and Samuel Hoblit, clerk. Messrs. Bowman and Mann were old school Baptists who were vigorously opposed to the missionary movement as well as the paying of salaries to pastors and the church was organized in accordance with their views.

In August of 1838, Mr. Bowman was succeeded as pastor by J. D. Newell and at the same meeting where Mr. Newell was selected a resolution was passed that "the church agree that her members shall have their liberty of conscience respecting assisting their minister or for missionary purposes if they choose." In 1841 the church adopted new articles of faith, among which was the following: "We believe it the duty of members of the church to contribute to the support of the ministry according to their ability."



The Baptist Church



The town of Atlanta was laid out in 1853 and by 1855 had become a sprightly town. The inhabitants of New Castle moved to Atlanta, abandoning the old settlement and the New Castle Baptist Society thereupon disposed of the old meeting house at New Castle and in 1855 erected a new church edifice in Atlanta, changing the name of the society to the Atlanta Baptist church. The new building was 48 feet by 60 feet in dimensions, with a gallery opposite the pulpit. The trustees of the church at this time were Elias Harness, Samuel Bevan, Jerome B. Tenney, Samuel Hoblit and George M. Angell. In the spring of 1856, Rev. E. J. Thomas became the regular pastor.

On New Year's morning of 1872, the church erected in 1855 was destroyed by fire. From 1872 until 1886 the congregation held services in the Congregational and Cumberland Presbyterian churches. In July of 1885 the contract for erecting a new church building was let. This building was completed in 1886 and was dedicated March 21, 1886. The entire cost of the new building, 36 feet by 50 feet, with an addition 16 feet by 48 feet on the west, including ten memorial windows, furnishings and furnace amounted to \$4,146. Church services in this building continued until the year 1941. Later the church disbanded and the church building was sold at auction in 1948. Subsequently it was torn down and removed. The church edifice was located on Fourth Street, on the site now occupied by the B. F. Twomey home.

## THE ATLANTA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Atlanta Christian Church was organized in 1855 in the Baptist Chapel where meetings were held the first year on Lord's Day afternoons.

The organization was made under the direction of George W. Minier with 32 charter members who were Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Ewing, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wright, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Judy, Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson Howser, Mr. and Mrs. James Shores, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Howser, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Howser, Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson Britt, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Dills, Mr. and Mrs. Ambrose Holland, Mr. and Mrs. John Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Riley, Mr. and Mrs. George Dyer, Dr. and Mrs. Arteburn, Mrs. Dr. J. B. Tenney, Mrs. Sallie Strong, Mrs. Gill and Mrs. Christenson.

The first elders were C. F. Ewing and Andrew Wright; the first deacons were Jacob Judy and Jefferson Howser; James Shores was clerk. The first minister was W. M. Guilford who was at that time principal of the public schools.

The first building was erected in 1856 and later there were several additions. The Harness Memorial Library dedicated Nov. 7, 1897 being the most important. This first building served the congregation until removed to give place for the present structure. Under the leadership of Rev. R. H. Newton agitation for a modern building to serve the needs of the Church and Bible School was started. Early in 1912 plans were accepted by the congregation for a completely furnished structure to cost \$20,000 or more.

Work progressed rapidly and on November 9, 1913 the new church was dedicated. However, the cost of the new building turned out to be \$30,000 instead of \$20,000.

The membership is approximately 500.



The Old Christian Church





The Present Christian Church

#### THE ATLANTA CHRISTIAN SCIENCE SOCIETY

A group known as the Christian Science Society was organized about 1910 and held regular meetings and Sunday School in the Modern Woodman Hall. There were about twenty members.

Later the society disbanded and all funds on hand were sent to the Mother Church.



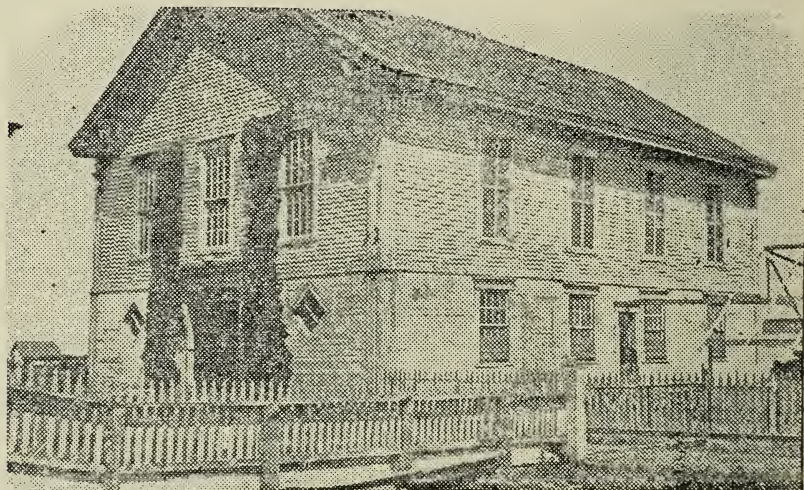
## THE ATLANTA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The Atlanta Congregational Church was one of the earliest Congregational Churches in Illinois, having been organized in 1840 in the Mt. Hope settlement. The church was moved to Atlanta as soon as that town was platted in 1853, being probably the first church society holding services in the new town. A new church edifice was erected in 1859 and on the evening of July 4th, before the building was seated, an ice cream social was held in the church. Abraham Lincoln attended and was presented a cake. H. W. Cobb was pastor at this time.

The church building was a two story structure. The pastor and his family occupied the first floor and the religious services were held on the second floor.

The society has been inactive since 1885. The church had no prospect for better times, as the society numbered but about twenty members. The building was then occupied by the Cumberland Presbyterians.

Later the building was moved to the A. E. Barnes place at the north edge of Atlanta where it still stands.



The Congregational Church. About 1934



The Cumberland Presbyterian Church

#### THE ATLANTA CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Atlanta Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized about 1856; but the denomination, having three or four houses of worship within a few miles of town, no building was erected in Atlanta until 1866. Rev. Joseph Roach was pastor at this time.

This structure, located at the corner of Fourth and Race Streets, was used by them when they had regular services until January 1880 when it was leased to the Baptists. They used it until January 1885, when the Cumberland Presbyterians resumed its use. The last of November, 1885 it was burned in some unknown manner and the society rented the Congregational Church until the spring of 1886. Elders were James Adams, William Roach, and I. S. Chenoweth; trustees, S. H. Nolder and James Adams. An attractive brick building was erected later. This edifice was located west of the Pennsylvania Railroad Depot.

The church was later referred to as the Presbyterian Church, although according to Mrs. Eugenia Horrom Lee, who was a member of the church, it was always a Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The membership became so small that the congregation disbanded.

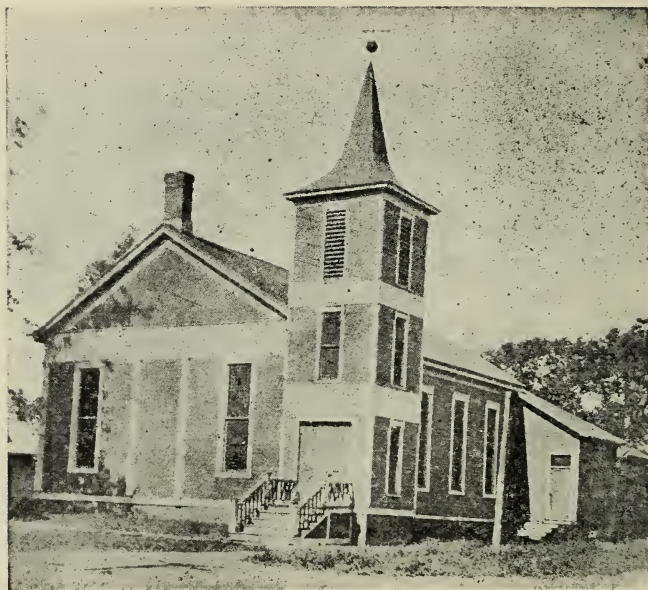
The building was sold in 1919. E. Blinn Ransdell and his father, the late Grant Ransdell, bought it and took the bricks to the farm of E. Blinn Ransdell north of Atlanta. They were used in building the house which is the home of the E. Blinn Ransdells.



## THE ATLANTA METHODIST CHURCH

Methodism in Atlanta dates back to the earliest history of the town. When the Chicago and Alton railroad was built in 1853 the new town grew like a mushroom. People flocked in and many of them were of the Methodist faith. A movement to organize a church was instituted in 1854, the first meeting being held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Cantrall, who lived on Railroad Street in the house now owned and occupied by Mrs. Theodore Williams. This building was operated by Mr. Cantrall as a boarding house and hotel and was Atlanta's first public hostelry.

In the year 1854 the annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church appointed Rev. James Newbegin preacher in charge of the Waynesville circuit which contained the following charges: Waynesville, Maddox School House, Bell's School House, Rock Creek, Mt. Hope, Atlanta, Funk's Grove and Hittle's Grove. At the time of Mr. Newbegin's second appointment in Atlanta he preached in the hotel of James M. Cantrall. After



The Old Methodist Church





The Present Methodist Church

this meeting a class of twenty-five members was formed and James Cantrall was named leader. After making about four rounds on the circuit Rev. Newbegin became dissatisfied and, after being released from his charge, returned to England, his native land.

Rev. John M. Preshaw came for the remainder of the conference year. During the winter months he preached in the Seminary, later known as Hon. A. Reise's barn.

On January 22, 1856 the trustees resolved to let the contract for furnishing the material and building a house for \$2715.00.

On the first Sabbath in February, 1857 the church was dedicated and on June 8, 1857 the trustees received the building from the contractors. There were just forty-four members.

For more than fifty years the old church served as a place of worship. It was repaired and partially rebuilt on several occasions but the main auditorium remained about the same as when built in 1857. The membership felt the need of a more adequate church building to accommodate the services and various activities of a growing organization.

At the third quarterly conference, May 1913, Pastor F. M. Harry was authorized to secure funds for the construction of a new church. By December of that year \$10,000 had been pledged and plans were adopted. April 1, 1914 the contract was let and work started.

The old church building was sold to Motz and Ary, who moved it to a lot on East Vine Street where it still stands.

On Sunday, February 21, 1915, the church was formally dedicated with Bishop McDowell, Doctor B. F. Shipp and Rev. J. C. Nate as guests. Dedication day, an all day service, ended with the church free of all debt.

The building is still beautiful and the membership is growing in numbers. There are now over three hundred members.

## THE ATLANTA AFRICAN METHODIST CHURCH

An African Methodist Society was organized in Atlanta in 1875, and a church was erected by the society in 1876. The trustees at the time of the building of the church were Daniel Fitch and William Escue. The Society is now inactive.

## THE ATLANTA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

For many years the members of the Presbyterian Church worshipped in a hall rented for the purpose. In 1868 they completed their house of worship, a comfortable brick structure which, unfortunately, cracked and was considered unsafe. The only two regular pastors the society had were Rev. Crissman and Rev. A. Bartholomew. The building was repaired and for a few years monthly services were held. It is difficult to find information concerning this church organization, but one of our older citizens states that he remembers when the group was active in Atlanta.

## THE UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

The Atlanta United Pentecostal Church was organized about seven years ago. Rev. Roy Simpkins of Waynesville was the first Pastor. The congregation met in the building next to the Drug Store at the corner of Vine and Railroad Streets. Later the members bought the Texaco Station and Cafe on old Route 66 and remodeled it, making a church and living quarters for the pastor and his family. Services are now held here. The present membership is small.

## ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Catholic services were held in private homes in Atlanta as early as 1856, shortly after the establishment of the city.

In 1860, Father Martin of the Lincoln parish, began to attend the parish here as a mission, celebrating mass once each month. In 1880 the parish as a mission was transferred to the Elkhart parish.

The present church edifice was erected in 1881 at a cost of \$1,200.00 under the ministration of Father M. Reynolds, rector of the Elkhart parish, who was holding services at Atlanta.

Father W. J. Drummy of Elkhart became officiating priest in August, 1904.

At the present time services continue, children receiving instruction each Saturday morning; mass is celebrated each Sunday morning.



St. Mary's Church



## MURPHY HALL

Murphy Hall was erected in 1878 as the result of the temperance movement, it being named for Father Murphy, the founder of the Father Murphy Total Abstinence Society.

On Sunday, October 21, 1877, the Murphy temperance movement was inaugurated in Atlanta by Dr. Conway. Early in the history, the project of building a grand hall for the temperance meetings was mentioned. In the latter part of December, the project took definite shape, and a subscription stock list was drawn up and circulated. Only a few days' canvassing made the building of the hall an assured fact. To Frank Hoblit and P. R. Marquart, more than to any other two men, were the people indebted for the success of the undertaking. On February 22, the foundation was laid and from that time on the progress was rapid.

The hall was a frame building, 90 feet long and 48 feet wide, with self supporting roof. A stage, 20 feet deep, was built across the rear and raised 4½ feet high, giving room for dressing rooms and kitchen below. Four windows on each side and two in front gave light and ventilation, and there were four chimneys to accommodate as many stoves for heating.

The building stood on Railroad street, between Vine and Elm, fronting the C. & A. railroad tracks.

The directors met on April 15 and set the date of the dedication for May 5, 1878. Invitations were sent to all the temperance people in the county to meet with them, and the audience on that day numbered almost 1,400. The Hon. A. Brown Bunn, of Decatur, was the speaker of the day.

It was in Murphy Hall that many of our people made their first appearance before the public in school entertainments. It was here that hundreds of our young folks gave their commencement orations as a requirement for graduation; it was here that Flora DeVoss and her dramatic company and Callahan's Comedians entertained the Atlanta Fair week crowds; that Church's Minstrels packed the house; that young folks danced and roller skated; that the churches held their bazaars; the women served big election day dinners; and amateur thespians trod the boards in home talent plays. Here, too, were held the political rallies in the days when political rallies were taken seriously, and after the smoke of battle had cleared, the results were given over a special telegraph wire to the hall to those awaiting the outcome of the election. With the rise of basketball as a high school indoor sport, the old hall became the scene of some hectic encounters.



Murphy Hall

Probably best remembered of the managers of the hall is the late Dr. B. I. Pumpelly, who brought some fine attractions here with the winter entertainment courses and the road stock companies. In connection with his management, many of the older people will remember Addison Carter and his wife, Maggie, who acted as janitors.

At a meeting of the stockholders and directors of the Atlanta National Union Temperance Association, held April 5, 1946, it was the concensus of opinion that the old hall had outlived its usefulness and would be a liability rather than an asset to the community in the future. It was voted to sell the building at auction. The decision to remove the building was arrived at with reluctance, but there seemed to be no other practical solution.

The building had been used as a warehouse by the Mountjoy Hybrid Seed Co. during the last years of its existence.

The Murphy Hall building was sold at public auction, Saturday afternoon, May 11, 1946. The successful bidders at \$2925 were George F. and Frank Snyder, of Decatur.

The site is now occupied by the Atlanta Food Locker, built by the Logan County Cooperative Food Locker Co.

## ATLANTA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Atlanta suffered severely from fires in the early days. Most of the buildings were of wood, and once a fire started, there was little chance of extinguishing it. With the establishment of a city waterworks system in 1892, there was a better opportunity afforded to combat fire, and a four-wheel cart with ladders and leather water buckets was provided for use of the volunteer firemen. This was drawn by the firemen. Two-wheel hose carts were also drawn by hand, but in later years were hooked to automobiles. About 1913, a chemical tank was purchased. This was also mounted on wheels and at first was pulled by hand. Among the early volunteer fire fighters were Ed (Jack) Conklin, Frank Cheek, Horace Houghtling, Ralph Welch, John Keene, Jesse Knowles, Asa Coffman and Ira Bowers.

The Atlanta Fire Department was formed September 24, 1926, and a fire truck was bought by the city. The following officers were chosen: Neil Rice, chief; Clarence Hieronymus, assistant chief; Walter Cheek, first captain; Harold Mason, second captain; Paul Schmidt, first engineer; Vaughn Harkreader, second engineer; Raymond Downs, third engineer; Ralph Demling, fourth engineer; M. M. Hoose, secretary. Other members of the department were Otto Goeman, Leo Hitchell, Lee Irvin, Elmer Taylor, W. A. Hieronymus, Albert Fulk, R. D. Stetson, Harold Douglas, J. N. Hayter, Loy Brandt and Clarence Black.

The City of Atlanta makes annual appropriations for the upkeep of the department and in other ways has maintained the closest collaboration in order to keep up the efficiency of the department. During the early years of the organization the firemen added to their available funds by promoting Firemen's Balls.

A fire District for the protection of the surrounding territory was formed in 1949. A modern fire truck was bought by the district, and although title to the truck is in the district, and the city is not a part of the district, the truck is manned and maintained by the Atlanta Fire Department and is available for use within the City of Atlanta. Ralph Brown, Henry Armbrust and Allen Applegate are directors of the Fire District.

The Atlanta Fire Department has an excellent record, and statistics show that its fire losses in the city are among the lowest in the state.

Of the original members of the Fire Department, only four are still active—Neil Rice, Harold Mason, Paul Schmidt and Elmer Taylor.



## ATLANTA GETS ELECTRIC LIGHTS

Agitation for electric lights in Atlanta was started in 1895, when Robinson & Son, of Girard, applied for a franchise to install and operate an electric light plant in Atlanta. At a special election held Monday, September 9, 1895, the people of Atlanta declared themselves in favor of electric lights by a vote of 106 to 51. A franchise was granted to Edward M. Burnett and John C. Robinson at a city council meeting in October, and work was commenced at once on the building to house the electric light plant. Street lights were turned on in Atlanta for the first time on Saturday night, February 1, 1896. A meeting had been arranged by Alderman Charles Haise to celebrate the event, but due to a broken circuit, it was nearly midnight before the lights could be turned on. However, the coming of electric lights to Atlanta was celebrated at a meeting on May 9, 1896.

Service at first was limited and a signal warning that the lights would be turned off at 11 o'clock broke up social gatherings and cut short the romancing of Atlanta's young people at an early hour.

With the change from direct to alternating current in 1914, electricity in Atlanta assumed greater importance as a means of furnishing power. In 1915, the lines were extended to McLean, the farmers furnishing a free right-of-way through their lands.

The Robinson family disposed of the system to the Central Public Service Corporation in November, 1925. The Lincoln branch of this company was known as the Illinois Public Utility Co. The operating company at the present time is the Central Illinois Electric and Gas Co.

## THE TELEPHONE

Atlanta's first telephone line was built by Dr. C. O. Burke. It was about 15 miles long and connected Armington and Atlanta and was extended to the home of W. H. Wright in the New Kentucky neighborhood. Intermediate stations were at the George Albright and J. I. Mountjoy homes. Shortly after the first line was put in operation, Dr. Banks, another Atlanta physician, built a line to the Gold Springs neighborhood, west of Atlanta, and in 1898, Dr. Burke added a line to the farms of Albert Barnes and Charles Atchison, southeast of town.

As the telephone grew in importance and the business was expanded, Dr. Burke sold his system to the Palmer-Darnall Electric Co., and Dr. Banks disposed of his lines to the farmers of Eminence township. For years, the two systems competed for Atlanta's patronage, and many business men and other residents were subscribers of both companies. Finally, the Baker Telephone Co., successor to the Palmer-Darnall company, bought the Eminence company and the two systems were merged. The Baker Telephone Co. was succeeded by the Illinois Commercial Telephone Co. and it is now known as the General Telephone Co. of Illinois.

## RURAL FREE DELIVERY

The first Rural Free Delivery route in Logan county was established out of Atlanta, December 4, 1899. The carrier was A. E. Mountjoy, and the route served 105 families. The route covered the north half of Eminence township. The second and third routes in the county were also out of Atlanta. John E. Larison was the first carrier on Route 2 and Milam Perkey on Route 3. The three routes operated out of Atlanta for many years, but as the roads were improved and better means of transportation became available, one route was dropped and the territory added to the other two. At the present time, the local carriers cover a distance of about 45 miles each.

## RED CROSS

A talk by Dr. W. H. Gardner, of Paris, France, was given at the Christian Church in Atlanta on March 11, 1917, explaining the organization and working of the Red Cross Society. The Atlanta people became interested and a meeting was held on March 28th to initiate the local chapter. Mayor J. R. Fawyer became temporary chairman, Mrs. M. F. Watt, Secretary, M. F. Watt, Treasurer, Mrs. J. R. Patton, membership chairman of the entire community, with Miss Ella Boosinger, Mrs. C. O. Burke, and Mrs. F. L. Sumner named chairman of their respective wards. On April 2nd, the following ten Charter members were listed: Mrs. J. R. Patton, Mrs. C. O. Burke, Mrs. Hattie Medberry, Mrs. F. L. Sumner, Mrs. R. G. Bevan, Mrs. M. F. Watt, Mrs. Leo Hitchell, Rev. J. C. Ellenwood, Dr. J. R. Fawver, and M. F. Watt. Meetings were held each Monday evening in the schoolhouse, with speakers, music and reports of the boys in service. By April 24th, the membership had increased to 149, the permanent Society was organized. Its officers were: Dr. Maskel Lee, chairman; Mrs. C. O. Burke, vice-chairman; M. F. Watt, treasurer; Mrs. M. F. Watt, secretary; Mrs. J. R. Patton, membership chairman.

Sewing, surgical dressings, and knitting were started. The local chapter furnished the material to the workers. This material was purchased

with funds secured from donations of loyal citizens and later by money earned by various benefits. The working-committees were set up as follows: Mrs. G. L. Church, sewing and hospital supplies; Mrs. Nannie Shores, purchasing committee; Mrs. Edna Applegate, membership; Mrs. M. F. Watt, publicity; Mrs. Harriet Judy, Mrs. Minnie McKown, Mrs. Maude Shotwell, Ways and Means; Mrs. R. D. Stetson, cutting; Mrs. E. G. Ransdell and Mrs. T. C. Harry, inspection and passing.

A room was set up for daily work and instruction with Mrs. Church in charge. Helpers were appointed to assist each day of the week. The country school districts also conducted weekly work rooms at their respective schools.

By July, the membership had risen to 235, and the whole community was working together in this great society. With the beginning of school, the work rooms were moved to the McKown building, and the various units divided. Mrs. Church remained general superintendent of work and chairman of surgical dressings; Mrs. Forgy, sewing; Miss Thomas, knitting; and Mrs. R. D. McKown, packing and mailing. In October, the work rooms were moved to the Library. By November, the group was so large that the surgical dressings were moved to the new Shores and Ewing Garage, while the knitting department remained in the Library. In March, 1918, the work room for surgical dressings and sewing was again moved, this time to the Knecht building north of Shotwell's Drugstore.

On January 1, 1918, the Atlanta Knitters led all of Logan County in amount of work produced. This was the result of the diligent work done by individual knitters and the help of a knitting machine donated by Seward Fields. Mrs. James Shores and Mrs. G. L. Church knit the legs of the socks on the machine in the evenings. Then Mr. August Wefer knit in all the toes and heels for them. His wife finished the work by doing all the washing and blocking.

All members of the Society and other citizens joined forces to secure the financial aid necessary to meet the expenses for supplies and fill the national quotas for money and finished articles. Individual donations, dances, box socials, sale lunches, and many events were put on to raise money. Outstanding among these activities were the Barn Warming sponsored by the Hoblit Community Club and the Carnival and Pavement Dance by the whole community. The Warming of J. W. Hoblit's barn on April 24, 1918 netted \$1000 for the Red Cross Fund. On August 27, 1918,



the Red Cross Carnival was held in downtown Atlanta. An auction of donated livestock and farm produce was held at 3 p. m. and brought in \$2350.00. A dinner was served in the Murphy Hall beginning at 5 p. m. and continued until 11 p. m. While this was going on, a Midway was conducted on the Library lawn, followed by a grand march and street dance. When the final reports were in, it was found that this united effort by the community, directed by competent leaders, had added \$6472.82 to the treasury.

The untiring efforts of the chapter were continued as long as there was any need for it. When the national emergency was over, the Atlanta Chapter found that they had exceeded all quotas asked of them both in money and supplies furnished and had a very tidy sum remaining in the bank. This money was used in following years to meet local needs of the unfortunate and to help in all national emergency calls. There were no programs or weekly meetings held after 1920, but the chapter stayed active and was available at all times should a need arise.

In 1939, the chapter lost Dr. Maskel Lee, who had been their faithful chairman since the organization in 1917. He was succeeded by Mr. C. H. Wright, who is chairman at the present time.

With the outbreak of World War II, the Atlanta Red Cross again rallied to the call. Work committees were appointed with Mrs. G. L. Church named General Chairman for a second time. Later, she was succeeded by Mrs. O. F. Mountjoy, who served as general chairman and chairman of sewing and surgical dressings. Mrs. P. A. Carihfield was her assistant and inspector. Mrs. Arthur Applegate served as secretary. The knitting was handled by Mrs. Dean Judy, and then jointly by Mrs. R. D. Stetson and Mrs. R. G. Wertheim.

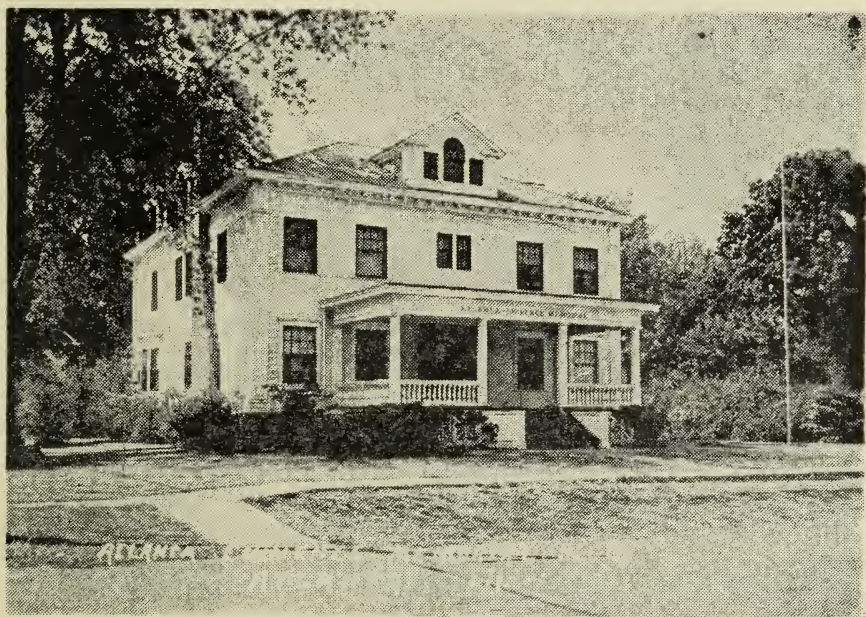
During World War II, the supplies were furnished by the Logan County Chapter and all quotas were turned in to them. Atlanta again exceeded all quotas. Everyone did his part, and when it was all over and the hours of service totaled, it was found that Mrs. D. J. Geach held the honor of having put in more hours of work than any one other individual.

Though their efforts have not had the publicity of earlier years, and so much emphasis is not placed on local chapters at the present, the Atlanta Red Cross is still active and ready to do its full part whenever the call is issued.

## THE ATLANTA MEMORIAL PARK DISTRICT

The Atlanta Memorial Park District comprises all of Atlanta township and approximately the eastern half of Eminence township, an aggregate of forty-four full sections. It was established by the voters of those communities for the purpose of providing a means of maintainance for the Atlanta-Eminence Community Memorial building.

At the same time and at the same voting places a governing board consisting of five commissioners was elected. They were Mrs. Harold Wiseman, Frank D. Hoblit, Dr. R. L. Ijams of Atlanta township, and Mrs. Murrel Miller and Barrett F. Rogers of Eminence township. At their organization meeting they elected as president Frank D. Hoblit, to whose efforts, more than those of any other one individual, the project owes its existence.



The Atlanta-Eminence Memorial Building

A tax rate of not to exceed eighty percent of one mill per dollar of the property valuation is levied to provide the means by which the building and surroundings are maintained and operated.

The formation of the park district and the establishment of the Community house was the outgrowth of a long-felt need for a gathering place and recreational center for the town and surrounding community. The decision to provide such a place and dedicate it as a lasting memorial to the soldiers of World Wars I and II brought about the wholehearted support of practically everyone.

A fund of \$1700 had been raised by popular subscription during World War II to build some sort of a memorial, but was not immediately used for that purpose. Returning soldiers asked that it be put to some practical use; and so the idea of a community Memorial center was born. A fund of \$5,503 was contributed by the now defunct Murphy Hall association. The Atlanta Woman's Club turned over their building fund of more than \$1500. Smaller contributions from other civic organizations, and very generous ones from individuals brought the building fund up to \$21,000.

With this amount the board was able to buy the commodious and well situated Patton residence. It was restored and remodelled to fit the necessities of the community. On the main floor of the house there are a good sized auditorium, an attractive parlor, ladies' lounge and a well equipped kitchen.

In the wide hall, occupying the place of honor, is a Memorial plaque on which is inscribed the names of all service personnel who went from Atlanta and vicinity. There are 173 names for the first war and 283 for the second. Eighteen are marked with gold stars.

On the second floor are the care-takers' quarters, the Legion room and the Girl Scout rooms. The basement has recreation rooms and equipment. In winter months recreation directors have been employed.

The Boy Scouts have their quarters in the second story of the garage at the rear of the building. Here are also rest rooms which serve the park. The grounds surrounding these buildings are artistically landscaped.

The Atlanta Park which adjoins was deeded to the Park District on Oct. 1, 1947 and has since been administered and maintained as a part of the Community building set-up.

The Atlanta-Eminence Community Memorial building was turned over to the public on Nov. 1, 1947. Governor Lester C. Hunt of Wyoming, a former Atlanta boy, gave the dedicatory address.



The Community Center has now been in operation for five years, and has fulfilled the hopes of its instigators. It serves well the whole community. It is the home of the American Legion and its Auxiliary, the Woman's Club, the Junior Woman's Club, the Rotary Club, the Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts. The Atlanta and Eminence Home Bureaus meet there when they desire, as do all other civic organizations. They may have the use of the building free of cost, after making proper arrangements with the caretakers. Private parties are charged a small fee.

The first secretary of the Park Board was E. B. Ransdell; James Ash has served continuously as treasurer.

## THE ATLANTA PUBLIC PARK

The Atlanta Public Park is a part of the city of Atlanta as originally platted by its founders, Richard Gill and A. W. Morgan. It is one whole block lying between Race and Vine, and Seventh and Eighth Streets. It was apparently a gift from the founders of the young town to the citizens of Atlanta.

An issue of the Logan County Forum, June 19, 1856 contains an account of a "mite society," newly formed, "having as its object the important purpose of improving and decorating the city park, and carrying out other such projects as the society might see fit to sponsor."

The officers elected were, President A. W. Morgan, Vice president Geo. L. Parker, Secretary S. D. Fisher, Treasurer Jeff L. Dunegan; the board of Trustees, A. N. Dills, A. K. Martin, R. H. Killen.

A committee of ten ladies, Mrs. G. L. Parker, Mrs. John Pallady, Mrs. G. M. Angell, Mrs. A. K. Martin, Mrs. J. H. Ball, Mrs. S. D. Fisher, Misses Belle Tenney, L. Randolph, J. Leonard, and J. Allen, was named "to attend to financial matters." Membership fee for the ladies was fifty cents and one dollar for the men. Fifty names were enrolled at the first meeting and many more were subsequently added.

The editor of the Forum, S. B. Dugger comments: "Since the only objection to our town that any one can have is that it is out on the open prairie with no trees to protect it," the mite society should "purchase and set out trees on each side of every street in town, commencing on one side with one kind of tree, and plant them from one end to the other; and another street with another kind and at the corner of each plant a good-sized poplar."

Since many of the large maple and elm trees along our streets and those in the park appear to be nearing the century mark, it seems fair to assume that his suggestion was adopted. If the "good-sized poplars" were planted, they have long since passed into oblivion.

Although the trees grew well, the park often suffered neglect, and was unkempt and weed-grown. Because of the ample facilities for large public gatherings, furnished by the Atlanta Fair grounds, the park was not often so used. In the days when chautauquas flourished, the tent was pitched in the park and the citizens enjoyed the entertainment furnished by the Lyceum bureaus.

An early band-stand, a small wooden structure, graced the park until the late nineties. In the spring of 1940 a substantial brick and concrete bandstand was constructed. It was dedicated on the Fourth of July, the last Fourth of July celebration that has been held in Atlanta.

The city of Atlanta deeded the park to the Park District on October 1, 1947. Since that time its affairs have been administered by the Park Board. The care-taker of the Community House cares for and polices the park. It has become a very pleasant and popular place. Many picnics and family reunions are held there. A play-ground and tennis court furnish recreation for children and teen-agers. In the fall the American Legion holds its annual Homecoming festivities there.

### THE ATLANTA WOMAN'S CLUB

In the month of January 1899 a group of women were invited to the home of Mrs. Mary Mix where a club called the "Fortnightly" was organized. The membership was limited to forty, and the dues were twenty-five cents per year. The chief aim of the club was to develop literary taste and culture and the first book purchased was "When Knighthood Was in Flower." This book was passed among the members who enjoyed it and discussed it and then gave it to the Library.

In June of 1900 the Club voted to change its name to "The Atlanta Woman's Club" and the first president was Mrs. C. C. Sater. A little later the Club dues were raised to a dollar; the Club joined the General Federation and sent two members to St. Louis as representatives or delegates. Also a rental shelf was established at the Library in October of 1924, with an initial gift of one hundred dollars. The limit on the number of members was rescinded.

Feeling that the Club needed a meeting place of its own a building fund was started and grew to quite a goodly sum. In the spring of 1947 the Club voted to turn this fund, more than fifteen hundred dollars, over to those in charge of securing funds for the purchase of the J. R. Patton home, which is now known as the Atlanta-Eminence Memorial Home. Now, after many years during which meetings were held in various halls and in the churches, the Club meets in the Atlanta-Eminence Memorial Home.

Through the years twenty-seven presidents have served the Club,

each one doing her bit to make our community a better place in which to live.

The present membership is almost one hundred and the Club dues are three dollars per year.

The Atlanta Woman's Club cooperates with the Atlanta Junior Woman's Club to sponsor Girl Scouting in Atlanta.

The Atlanta Woman's Club is affiliated with the General Federation, the Illinois Federation, the Seventeenth District Federation and the Logan County Federation of Women's Clubs.

Miss Ida V. Hieronymus served as State Chairman of Indian Welfare for two years, 1947-1949.

Those who have served as District Presidents are Mrs. A. B. Applegate and Miss Ida V. Hieronymus; and as County Presidents are Mrs. Charles Hayward, Mrs. J. R. Patton, Mrs. Maskel Lee and Mrs. Claude I. Miller. Mrs. Hayward was the first County President.

## THE ATLANTA JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB

On April 12, 1935 some of the young ladies of Atlanta met to organize a Junior Woman's Club. The meeting was held at the home of Mrs. J. R. Patton and all listened to an address by Mrs. Ralph Moratz of Bloomington on this movement. Miss Nancy Hoblit acted as chairman for the evening. Eleven of the thirteen present signed to join the Club. Then on April 18, 1935 the members of the newly organized Atlanta Junior Woman's Club met at the home of Mrs. Patton for election of officers. The following were elected: President, Mrs. Thelma Rush; Vice President, Miss Nancy Hoblit; Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Marian Hieronymus. This Club was sponsored by the Atlanta Woman's Club and had a membership of twenty. The first regular meeting was held at the home of Miss Nancy Hoblit and was of a social nature. Then on October 2, 1935 the group began holding their meetings in the Woman's Club rooms, which at that time were Woodman Hall, later the churches, with regularly arranged programs.

Despite difficulties the Club has continued to grow in numbers and interest and is now an active participant in many worthwhile projects of the community, among which is the co-sponsorship with the Atlanta Woman's Club, of the Atlanta Girl Scouts.

The Club is affiliated with the General Federation, the Illinois Federation, the Seventeenth District Federation and the Logan County Federation.

Eleven presidents have served the Club which now has a membership of forty-three.

Miss Charlotte Ann Bevan was District Junior Director during 1946-1947, Mrs. Pauline Pittenger during 1950-1951.



## THE AMERICAN LEGION

The American Legion, Gresham-Crutchley Post No. 341 was organized in 1920. There were forty-seven charter members: Dr. George W. Brock, Commander; Allen Applegate, Orville Atteberry, W. R. Barr, Allen Becker, Letto F. Becker, Lorin J. Bennett, J. E. Botkin, J. L. Bradway, Loy S. Brandt, Wayne Brandt, Fred L. Cheek, Walter E. Cheek, Dean Clawson, R. E. Carihfield, Albert Dreher, R. W. Dunham, Mark Ellis, Clifton C. Ewing, W. C. Finrock, Leslie Gresham, Jesse L. Griffin, Carl Hawes, Elbert Hieronymus, Merlin Huber, Kenneth E. James, Milton Kieszling, Owen McKevitt, James McKown, Dean Montgomery, Earl L. Mountjoy, Keith W. Murphy, James L. Oldaker, Clyde E. Pack, Arthur Pech, E. Blinn Ransdell, John Neil Rice, Paul A. Schmidt, David W. Sullivan, Harold Wagner, Harry H. Watt, Wendell Watt, Wayne H. Weber, C. O. Wedeberg, Charles Williams, Clarence Wilmert and Norven Zoffer.

The Post was named for the two boys who lost their lives in World War I, Bert Gresham and Roy Crutchley.

The Post first met in the rooms over the Kitchell grocery. In 1936 it was decided to buy the home of the late T. N. Hamilton. Jesse Botkin was commander at this time. By volunteer labor of the members this home was soon converted into an adequate Legion Home.

In 1947, after World War II, it was voted to sell this home and help buy the J. R. Patton house with the intention that it be made into a community Memorial center. This center is known as the Atlanta-Eminence Community Memorial. It is a memorial to the soldiers of World Wars I and II.

The Legion supports many community activities. Beginning in 1950 the Legion has sponsored an annual Atlanta Homecoming. There are now 165 members.

## THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

The American Legion Auxiliary was organized November 14, 1930. The charter members were: President, Mrs. Laurinda Watt; 1st Vice-President, Mrs. Dessie Becker; 2nd Vice-President, Mrs. Annie Hayter; Secretary, Mrs. Ruth Crawford; Treasurer, Mrs. Mabel Clawson; Chaplain, Mrs. May Griffin; Sergeant-at-Arms, Mrs. Leatha Ryan; Mrs. Wavie Botkin, Miss Maude Gehlbach, Mrs. Eliza Griffin, Mrs. Rhoda Hayter, Mrs. Katherine Johnson, Mrs. Anna Kearney, Mrs. Norma Kindred, Mrs. Jessie Kistner and Mrs. Mabel Myers Temple.

The Legion rooms were in the K. of P. building across from the Public Library. Meetings were held the first and third Mondays of each month. The first meeting was a business meeting held in the evening. The second meeting in the month was a social meeting held in the home of one of the members in the afternoon.

This Auxiliary Unit became inactive after a few years.

## **GRESHAM-CRUTCHLEY UNIT No. 341 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

The Gresham-Crutchley Unit 341 American Legion Auxiliary was organized Oct. 4, 1940. The Unit was named for Bert Gresham and Roy Franklin Crutchley both of whom lost their lives in World War I.

The charter members were: President, Mrs. Grace Short; 1st Vice-President, Mrs. Ruth Schmidt; 2nd Vice-President, Mrs. Mary Patton; Secretary, Mrs. Mary Brandt; Treasurer, Mrs. Blanche Wiseman; Historian, Mrs. Leatha Ryan; Chaplain, Mrs. Iva Horn; Mrs. Ruth Applegate, Miss Grace Baldwin, Mrs. Lena Baldwin, Mrs. Dessie Becker, Mrs. Georgia Blackwood, Mrs. Emma Borgelt, Mrs. Aileen Bradway, Mrs. Hazel Brandt, Mrs. Rena Compton, Mrs. Susie Crutchley, Mrs. Millie Dillon, Mrs. Eliza Griffin, Mrs. May Griffin, Mrs. Nellie Harkreader, Mrs. Hazel Huber, Mrs. Venus Lake, Mrs. Cora Mountjoy, Mrs. Rachel Perlman, Mrs. Stella Reinhart, Mrs. Elizabeth Speciale, Mrs. Irma Tuttle, Mrs. Doris Usherwood, Mrs. Hazel Vogt and Mrs. Verda Wagner.

The present membership is one hundred twenty-five.

The Auxiliary contributes to the Illinois Soldiers and Sailors Childrens School at Normal, the Veterans Hospitals at Dwight and Danville and to the Veterans at the Lincoln State School and Colony.

Each year the Unit sends a girl to Illini Girls State, gives a scholarship medal, based on courage, leadership, honor and scholarship, to an eighth grade girl, sponsors a poppy poster contest for school children and sponsors an Americanism essay contest for school children.

Members who are Gold Star Mothers are Mrs. Roscoe Williams and Mrs. Louis Baker.

Gold Star Mothers who have been members are Mrs. Minnie Young, Mrs. Nellie Brandt, Mrs. Blanche Williams, Mrs. Jessie Hubner, Mrs. Edward Purlee and Mrs. Susie Crutchley.

## **THE ATLANTA SPORTSMEN'S CLUB**

The early settlers of Illinois found the prairies abounding in game of all kinds which afforded good meat for food and hides for clothing.

Hunters and trappers came in large numbers to establish homes. They encountered many buffalo herds, also wolves, foxes, beavers and otters; also smaller game such as racoon, prairie chickens, wild turkeys, cotton tail rabbits and wild ducks and fish along the rivers.

Gradually the land was cleared and eager Sportmen of the state who wished to exercise their skill with firearms formed clubs of various sorts.

In 1927 Atlanta organized a Gun Club for the purpose of becoming skilled in trap shooting and marksmanship. Oran Atteberry was chosen president and J. A. Ash, secretary-treasurer.

Then in September 1928 the Club was reorganized and became the Atlanta Sportsman's Club. This group was not very active until 1934. Several fox drives were held.

In 1937 the Club organized as the Atlanta Chapter of the Logan County Sportmen's Club through the Lincoln Chapter and was also a member of the Illinois Federation. Its aim is bird rearing, feeding of game birds in winter, game cover and general hunting.

The Club has grown to one hundred in membership and in 1947 took out its own Charter and is now working with the Conservation Department at Springfield to establish recreation centers, to improve game laws, to eliminate pollution of streams and to reclaim flood lands along the Illinois River. To Otis Hulva goes much of the credit for the continued activities of this Club.

## **ROTARY CLUB**

The Atlanta Rotary Club No. 4142 of District No. 215 was organized in February 1937 with Charter Night being Feb. 23rd, 1937, under the sponsorship of the Lincoln Rotary Club.

Charter Night was attended by some 350 Rotarians, their wives and guests and was held in the High School Gym.

Dr. R. Lynn Ijams was the first president, with Charlew Few, Vice President; Ernest Seelye, Secretary-Treasurer, and Haskell Montgomery, Sergeant at Arms.

The Board of Directors consisted of the following members: R. L. Ijams, Richard Patton, J. M. Dowdy, J. A. Hoblit, P. A. Crihfield, Charles F. Few and L. E. Mason.



Regular meetings were to be held at 12:15 each Wednesday at the Christian Church.

There were 35 charter members and fourteen of the original Charter members are still active members and one is an honorary member.

One member of the Club, J. M. Dowdy, has a record of perfect attendance. The Club is known throughout the present District as one of the top clubs in attendance.

The Club has aided and sponsored numerous projects during its sixteen years as a service Club, but is best known for its sponsorship and work with the Boy Scouts of Atlanta.

At present the Club alternates its noonday meetings between the Christian Church, the Methodist Church and the Atlanta-Eminence Community building.

## BOY SCOUTS

In 1915 the first Boy Scout troop was organized by Rev. Robert H. Newton, pastor of the Christian Church. It was sponsored by the churches of Atlanta and the Scouts met in the basement of the new Christian Church. The boys in the troop raised funds by caring for lawns and gardens. Of the fifteen boys who formed the first troop only two now live in Atlanta.

When the United States entered World War 1 some of the older boys enlisted. The spirit of Scouting lived, but for a time there was no regular organization.

On January 4, 1926 Troop 23 of Logan County Boy Scouts was organized, with Allen Houser as Scoutmaster. It was sponsored by a group of interested citizens and the Scouts met in the Library basement. The boys formed their own band and played for local gatherings.

June Crandall and Verne Riley were the troop's first Eagle Scouts. Conrad Miller was chosen to represent the Council at Culver Camp. The troop won many awards, among them a silver loving cup.

After the Council acquired Camp Griesheim, Atlanta contributed and erected one of the cabins.

At one time, during the period that J. B. Austin was Scoutmaster and Harold Haines assistant Scoutmaster there were six Eagle Scouts in the troop—Robert Applegate, Robert Carihfield, Thomas Hieronymus, Richard Howser, Bernard Twomey, Jr. and Carl Watt. The troop attended a Region 7 Camporee at Terre Haute, Indiana and came home with a blue ribbon.

The Atlanta Rotary Club has sponsored Boy Scouts in Atlanta continuously since 1938 or '39.

In 1943 the troop was reorganized by Scoutmaster Harold Haines and his assistants, Dick Gilbert, Dick Schmidt and Barrett W. Rogers. Mr.

Haines was awarded the Scoutmaster's Key for length of service and outstanding qualities of leadership. Bob Ellis, one of the Scouts in the troop, had the pleasure of seeing his father, Judge William S. Ellis, one of the original incorporators of the Logan County Council, awarded the Silver Beaver on February 12, 1946.

Three Scouts, Lynn Hieronymus, Allyn Ijams and Larry Johnson, received Eagle awards, January 26, 1950. Bob Ellis and Jim Dickerson went as delegates to the International Boy Scout Jamboree at Valley Forge, June 25, 1950. George Brock was Scoutmaster.

The Atlanta Scouts are now Troop 123 of the Prairie Trails District of the Corn Belt Council Boy Scouts of America. They have their quarters on the second floor of the garage at the rear of the Community Building. The Troop Committee, the fathers and the Park District Board worked together to make these quarters a suitable meeting place.

### THE CUB SCOUTS

On October 21, 1936 the Parent Teacher Association voted to sponsor a Cub Scout program in Atlanta. The following committee was appointed: William S. Ellis, Joseph Billeter, Mrs. Madeline Watt and Mrs. Leska Taylor.

The first Cub Scout Pack was organized in November, 1936. A training course in Cubbing was given by William S. Ellis. The Charter was received January 14, 1937. Mr. Ellis was the first Cubmaster; Thomas H. Tuttle was the first assistant. Members of the first Pack committee were G. H. Tuttle, Phillip McCullough and J. P. Billeter. Mrs. Maxey Sugg was the first Den Mother, and Robert Applegate and Carl Watt were the Den Chiefs. William S. Ellis, Jr. was the first Atlanta Cub to pass the Bobcat requirements.

After a few years interest lagged and Cubbing was inactive until 1948. The Atlanta Cub Scout Pack No. 123 was organized April 24, 1948. The Charter was received May 15, 1948, at which time an Indian Ceremonial was presented by the Pack. The Couples Class of the Methodist Church has continuously sponsored this group. Edward Pittenger and Leland H. Dunham were the first institutional representatives; George Stunkard the first Cubmaster; Eldon Givens, the first Assistant Cubmaster. The Pack, consisting of twenty-one boys, was divided into three dens. Mrs. George Stunkard, Mrs. Edward Pittenger and Mrs. Homer Hamblin were Den Mothers; Robert M. Ellis, Lynn Hieronymus and Allyn Ijams were Den Chiefs. Dr. R. L. Ijams and Russell Daugherty, Scout Executive for the Prairie Trails District, were active in the establishment of this Pack.

Weekly Den meetings are held for the boys in the homes of the Den Mothers and monthly meetings are held at the Atlanta-Eminence Memorial home for the parents and Cubs. The Cub program furnishes fun for the boys and guidance in developing character, skill and interests. It fulfills the need of boys for belonging to a "gang."

## GIRL SCOUTS

The first step toward Girl Scouting in Atlanta was taken by the Atlanta Woman's Club. On Nov. 10, 1937 that organization voted to sponsor Girl Scouting in this community. The objectives of the Girl Scout organization are: character building, creative recreation, responsible and democratic citizenship, community service, world friendship, the development of skills and attitudes that build better human relationships, which, in turn, make happier homes in better communities.

On Jan. 5, 1938 the president of the Woman's Club appointed the first Troop Committee as follows: Mrs. Arthur Applegate, Mrs. Frank Bevan, Mrs. Oran Brandt, Mrs. Roy Colaw and Mrs. Harold Wiseman. After several meetings of the Troop Committee, mothers, potential leaders and a National Staff representative, two "Lone Troops" were registered with the National Organization May 5, 1938. During the first year of Girl Scouting forty-four girls, ten to fourteen years of age, and eleven adults were registered. Miss Emma Wiggers, Miss Esther Volle, Miss Mildred Kurth and Miss Pauline Lundgren were among the first of the Girl Scout leaders.

The Atlanta Junior Woman's Club, soon after it was organized, voted to cooperate with the Atlanta Woman's Club in sponsoring the Girl Scouts. Mrs. Robert McKown and Mrs. Robert Wertheim, serving during the year 1940-41, were the first Girl Scout Committee.

Girl Scouting continued active, having an average registration of thirty-three girls and nine adults, until May of 1943 when there were no leaders available.

In March 1946 Mrs. Elton Fuller, Mrs. Sam Ewing and Mrs. Darrell Rankin volunteered to serve as leaders and Girl Scouting was revived. Twenty-nine girls, ages eleven, twelve and thirteen, and six adults were registered.

In March, 1947 the first Brownie troop was organized in Atlanta. Twenty-two girls, ages seven, eight and nine, and five adults were registered. Mrs. Harold Gilbert and Mrs. Cecil French were leaders.

In January, 1947 the troops in Atlanta ceased to be "Lone Troops" when the Atlanta Girl Scout Association was formed as part of the Logan County Council. Mrs. Paul Schmidt was chairman and Mrs. Eldon Givens, vice-chairman of the new organization.

Mrs. Paul Schmidt has served as president of the Logan County Girl Scout Board of Directors and Mrs. R. L. Ijams has served as program chairman of the Logan County Council; Mrs. Arthur Applegate has served as a member of the program committee; Mrs. Elton Fuller has served as chairman of the County Membership-Nominating Committee; Mrs. Eldon Givens has served as a member of the County Staff and Office Committee.

In February, 1948 the Girl Scouts were assigned a room in the Atlanta-Eminence Memorial Home and in April the mothers and fathers of the girls furnished and decorated it, making it a most attractive meeting place. The Girl Scouts helped with a general money making project for the benefit of the Memorial Home fund.

With the advantages of better training for leaders and a wider scope



of program activities which were a result of Council membership, the scouting standards of both girls and adults have steadily risen.

In September, 1950 the first Senior Scout troop was organized. Mrs. D. A. Hofer and Mrs. Merle Liesman were leaders. Fourteen girls, ages fourteen to eighteen, and five adults were registered.

Joyce Bateman, Virginia Bateman, Dorothy Dyer, Barbara Gilbert, Sally Givens, Joyce Ijams, Lynd Wertheim and Hannah Ijams have earned and have awarded the Curved Bar.

At present there are eighty-four girls and thirty-three adults registered.

## FARM BUREAU AND THE 4-H CLUB

The Logan County Farm Bureau was organized Dec. 5, 1917 with approximately 300 charter members. Murrel Miller was elected to the first executive board. Mr. E. T. Ebersol, first Farm Adviser, was employed February 1, 1918. In January, 1922 the Farm Bureau "Reflector," issued monthly was first published. Its purpose is to keep members informed on all activities of the organization.

Among the services offered by the Farm Bureau are: assistance in the formation of co-operative and pure bred livestock associations, procuring high quality seed, sponsoring a baseball team and 4-H Clubs, maintaining a farm help bureau, a soil testing laboratory and a producer's market, making available information on insect and parasite control and offering all branches of insurance through the insurance department.

Atlanta Community was represented at the Producer's Market by Mrs. Fred Zollars, Mrs. James L. Bradway, Mrs. F. L. Sumner and Mrs. Dean A. Hoblit, whose culinary offerings were always in great demand.

Since 1943 many families have been enrolled in the Blue Cross Plan for hospital care through the Farm Bureau.

The County Rural Youth, sponsored by the Farm Bureau, is very active. Richard Applegate was one of the first presidents of this group.

On October 21, 1947, the Logan Farm Service Company was organized and now has service stations in several Logan County towns. J. Hardin Ellis represents the Atlanta territory on this board.

In the fall of 1938 the Logan County Co-operative Food Locker was formed. In 1945 they purchased the Myrick plant in Atlanta which they operated until the present new building was completed. E. L. Hughes has been a director on the board from this vicinity since 1943.

The artificial semination program was started in the fall of 1949.

Both the Agricultural and Home Economic 4-H Clubs were sponsored by the Farm Bureau until 1946 when the present Home Bureau was organized and became the sponsor for the Home Economic Clubs. Much credit is due Mr. Oscar F. Mountjoy and Mr. J. A. Hoblit, Sr. for the first corn and beef 4-H clubs in this area. The farm girls and boys of the community have shown a great deal of interest in these projects and have won some important awards. Among the State corn award winners were: Arthur Miller, highest yielding acre plot; Julia Irish, Corn Princess Utility Corn Show; John A. Hoblit, Jr., Corn Prince Utility Corn Show and Joseph B. Mountjoy, Corn Prince Utility Corn Show.

Frank D. Hoblit and Carolyn Mountjoy received blue ribbons in the County Calf Club show.

A large number of the Club members have received top awards at the County Fair.

John T. Brandt won the 4-H Championship on sheep at the International Show; Robert M. Ellis, first place State Sheep Production; Lyle Miller, first place State Dairy Judging and Walter Rankin, first place State Dairy Heifer.

In 1948 John W. Horn received the medal from the Lincoln Kiwanis Club, an award given annually to the outstanding 4-H Club boy or girl in the County.

## **HOME BUREAU AND THE 4-H CLUB**

On April 20, 1918 Atlanta was represented at a meeting of the Logan County Committee of Women's Council of National Defense at Lincoln to discuss the need for a leader of an organization which would render a greater service to the war emergency work. Under the direction of this leader, or Women's County Adviser, conservation of food, uses of substitutes in a balanced ration, conservation of health and child welfare would be taught. Speakers from the extension department of the U. of Illinois appeared before various women's groups to demonstrate the use of substitutes.

The Atlanta Women's Council of National Defense, registered Nov. 1917, met at the school house June 14, 1918 and the Atlanta Unit of the Logan County Home Improvement Association was organized. Mrs. A. B. Applegate was elected Chairman and Mrs. Maskel Lee, Secretary. Mrs. A. B. Applegate was selected as temporary representative on the county board with Mrs. A. P. Miller as alternate.

On June 28, 1918 at a meeting in Lincoln of the chairmen of all districts of the Logan County Home Improvement Association, the first Logan County Home Bureau was organized. Mrs. A. B. Applegate was

appointed to serve on the committee to secure a Home Adviser. Miss Lena Corzine was the first Home Adviser and began her work October 15, 1918. The following members of the Atlanta Unit served on the county board: Mrs. A. B. Applegate, Mrs. Bert McKinnon and Mrs. J. R. Patton. Mrs. John A. Hoblit and Mrs. Herman Hahn were unit representatives.

The Atlanta Unit met the third Friday of each month. The meetings were held in the Atlanta Library, the school house, the Baptist Church and in the homes of members. Production, preservation and nutrition of foods, improvement of home furnishings to promote happier family living, health, clothing construction and household accounts were some of the projects.

On October 15, 1920 a tour of the model home of Mrs. H. M. Dunlap at Savoy, Illinois was made by members of the Home Bureau; four cars of women representing the Atlanta Unit attended. Mrs. John A. Hoblit was County Tour Chairman.

Members of the Atlanta Unit served as hostesses at the Home Bureau tent maintained at the Lincoln Chautauqua for the convenience of Logan County Home Bureau members attending Chautauqua during the summer of 1921. The dues of \$2.00 were raised to \$3.00 in 1921.

The response to the efforts of local leaders, the Home Adviser and the U. of Illinois extension service was not great enough to make possible the continuation of the organization after the year 1922.

A group of women representing the townships of the county met Jan. 29, 1946 to discuss the possibility of organizing a Home Bureau. On April 23, 1946 the Logan County Home Bureau was organized with 540 members. It was incorporated in July, 1946. Mrs. Harold O. Quisenberry represented the Atlanta and Eminence Units as director on the first Executive Board of the Logan County Home Bureau. Mrs. Mabel Albrecht has served continuously as Home Adviser. The Atlanta Unit was organized July 16, 1946. Mrs. Frank Bevan was elected chairman; Mrs. DeWitt Yeast, vice chairman and Mrs. Howard Hieronymus, secretary-treasurer. There were 80 active and 10 associate members. The membership dues were \$5.00.

The aim of the Home Bureau is—"To have every home economically sound, mechanically convenient, morally wholesome, mentally stimulating, artistically satisfying, physically healthful, socially responsible, spiritually inspiring, founded on mutual affection and respect."



Meetings were first held in Woodman Hall, later in the Agriculture room at the school house. On December 18, 1947 the new Atlanta-Eminence Memorial Home became the regular meeting place.

Lesson projects have included home furnishings, family living, foods and nutrition, home management, health, clothing and child guidance and hand craft. Included in hand craft were glove making, leather tooling, metal craft, textile painting, chair caning, shell craft, decorative stitches and rug making.

The County organization has sponsored several tours, among them a tour of New Orleans, La. and Natchez, Miss. in 1947; tours of Holland, Mich. at tulip time in 1947 and 1949; tours of Washington, D. C. in 1947 and 1950. The Atlanta Unit co-operates each year in conducting T. B. X-rays and contributes to the Cancer and Polio funds.

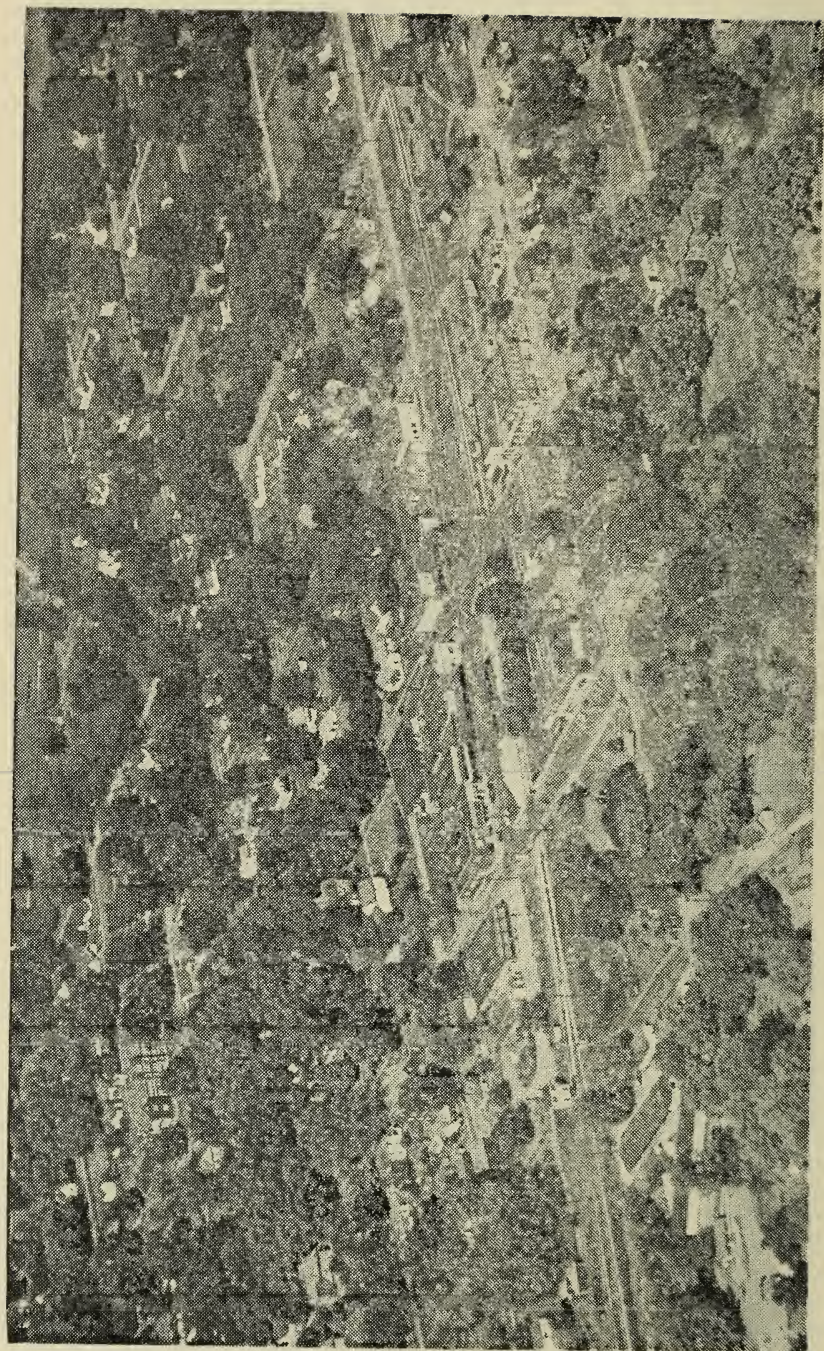
A "Breakfast in Hollywood" was held Jan. 11, 1947 in the High School gymnasium as a money making project. A large crowd attended and enjoyed Tommy Bartlett's program and the hat contest.

In May, 1929 the first Atlanta Home Economics 4-H Club was organized, with Mrs. O. F. Mountjoy, leader. Twenty-four girls, ages ten through seventeen, were enrolled as members. Meetings were held in the Atlanta school house and in the Hoblit rural school. The following girls were delegates to the State Contest: Carolyn Mountjoy and Julia Irish, dress revue delegates; Nadine Heft and Irma Brandt, delegates for the judging of clothing. Helen Paulsen was a Foods Project delegate to the State Fair.

After five years of successful work the Club became inactive and there were no 4-H Economic Clubs until the organization of the Logan County Home Bureau in 1946.

When the local unit of the Home Bureau first organized it sponsored three 4-H Clubs. Mrs. Arthur Begolka, Mrs. William Turner and Mrs. DeWitt Yeast were leaders. Mrs. Yeast is a present member of the County 4-H Committee. Sixty-five girls have been active in 4-H work during the past six years. Dixie Lee Baker was a delegate for dress revue from Logan County to the State Fair in 1951; Rosemary Bruce entered her dress to be judged for clothing construction at the State Fair in 1952; Lynd Wertheim attended 4-H camp in Petersburg in 1947; Alice Begolka served on the County 4-H Federation Board in 1949.

Following is the pledge of the 4-H Club—"I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service, my health to better living, for my club, my community and my country."



Atlanta As It Looks Today From The Air



## REMINISCENCES

### ATLANTA'S DRY-POINT ETCHER

Otto Schneider, one of Atlanta's early residents, studied and "drew pictures" in Atlanta's school; and later rose to the top in his chosen profession as a dry-point etcher.

After studying abroad, he settled in Chicago, where he established his own portrait studio and did work for the Chicago newspapers and the "Roycrofters" of East Aurora, N. Y.

An appreciation of his work, by Booth Tarkington, appears in the October, 1905 issue of the "Metropolitan Magazine," now on file at the Public Library; and a signed sample of his etchings may be seen at the home of Harry Tuttle.

### A PIONEER IN BUSINESS

One of Atlanta's pioneer business men was A. E. Church who established a furniture store in 1857.

Being a cabinet maker it fell to his lot, as was customary in those days, to make "coffins" upon request. These were of walnut lumber and varnished, or of pine and covered with black velvet.

As none were "carried in stock," each one was "made to measure" and he often worked all night, with someone holding a lamp for him.

No other service was rendered by him then—not even a hearse. Neighbors would bathe and dress the body; if a minister was available he would give the funeral sermon and the coffin would be taken to the cemetery in a "lumber wagon" and lowered by lines taken from one of the sets of harness into a grave opened by friends.

The cemeteries were not far away, many of them being started as private burial plots by families in the vicinity. After a hearse was bought for local use it visited more than twenty-two cemeteries.

When partial embalming came into use the necessary instruments were carried into the home in a small wooden box with a hinged cover. The embalming fluid was carried in a demijohn. (Long after arterial embalment came into practice, all the necessary equipment was taken into the home, where the preparation of the body was done, almost without exception, until the first Funeral Home was established in Atlanta in 1928.)

Of the 170 "coffins" he furnished in 1865, ninety-nine were for children and babies! In 1850 a child, at birth, had a life expectancy of only thirty-nine years. Today the life expectancy is sixty-seven years.

### A FARMER IN 1840

The Tuttle family came from Xenia, Ohio to Logan County, Illinois in 1840, and engaged in farming, brick making and sawing hardwood lumber before the Chicago and Alton Railroad was built or Atlanta existed.

"Uncle Jimmy" Tuttle used to drive hogs to Pekin, Illinois. On one such occasion he had some of the silver dollars he received in payment for the pigs melted and cast into spoons. Some of these spoons are still in the possession of his descendants.



The first school attended by his son "D" was at Roach's Chapel near the Roach Cemetery. The Chapel served as the community building and was the scene of many entertainments and spelling bees, which were probably enjoyed as much as our present day Movies, and at a very small fraction of the cost. Roach's Chapel is no longer standing.

## MEMOIRS OF JOHN STRONG

According to the memoirs of the late John Strong, the friendship of his father, Sylvester Strong, with Abraham Lincoln was one of the most significant of his memories. He mentioned especially the presentation of the cane to Lincoln at the Fourth of July celebration in 1859.

John Strong's first earnings were for plowing corn for his uncles with a yoke of oxen and a home-made plow at a "bit" (12½ cents) a day! At that time letter postage was 25c—paid at the post-office upon receipt of the letter, as there were no postage stamps until 1846 and letters were often sent by friends who happened to be travelling to their destination. Wool from their own sheep was taken to Bloomington for carding, and then made into thread on the hand spinning-wheels then in universal use, after which it was knitted into mittens, stockings, etc., or woven into cloth on their own hand looms for making into clothing.

In those days it took the combined efforts of the whole family to provide food, fuel, clothing, candles, soap and all the other necessities of living.

## "CHURCH'S BAND"

Church's Band, of Atlanta, was organized about 1903 by George L. Church, popular Undertaker and Furniture Dealer of Atlanta.

The members were boys of High School age and several of the older musicians who had former band experience with some of the earlier bands of Atlanta.

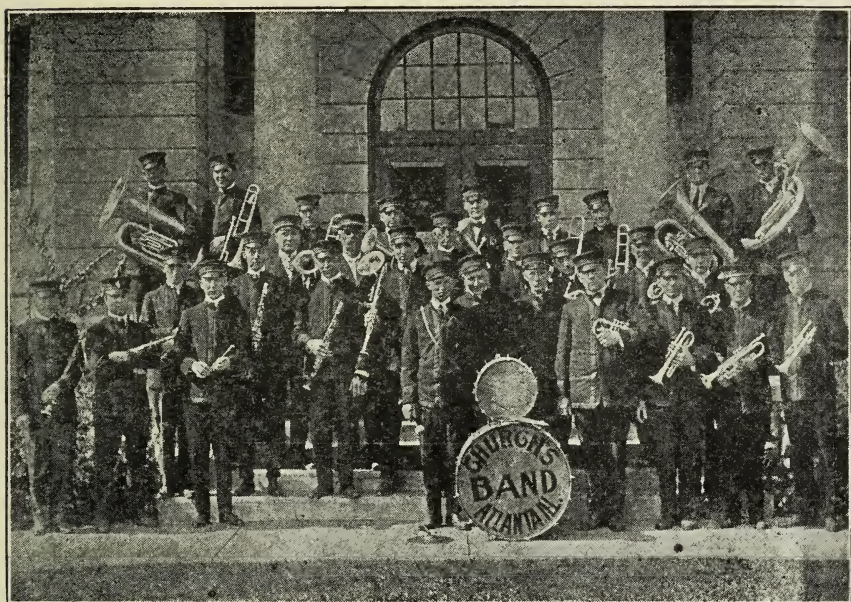
They held regular rehearsals and were soon playing engagements for the community. Each summer they played a series of concerts on the "Square" in Atlanta, which were partly supported by free-will contributions of the local merchants. They also played for picnics, political rallies, church suppers and many other community affairs.

For many years the band secured money for expenses from the proceeds of the annual "Church's Minstrel Show," which always filled "Murphy's Hall" to overflowing.

The Atlanta Fair was one of the main attractions for which the band always played. They were usually "reinforced" by two or three "outside" players; and also, for a number of years, by members of the Calahan Dramatic Company band. This troupe played annual "Fair Week" engagements at "Murphy's Hall" and always had a good band with them.

Church's Band was not only an integral part of this community, but was well known in surrounding towns; and played many engagements in Armington, Emden, Hartsburg, Lincoln, McLean and Waynesville.

The Band carried on for many years, until "Churchie's" sudden death in 1924, after which the band library of music and some of the instruments, which the band owned were given to the Atlanta School Band.



Church's Band About 1915

Left to Right: Mark Ellis, Harry Merry, Joe Ash, Glenn Towne, Clifford Hawes, Joe King, Wilbur Hawes, ——— Henshaw, Harry Coons, Murrel Miller, Charlie Lake, Cecil Goose, Clarence Wilmert, Charlie Gipson, Barrett Rogers, Merlin Dowdy, Dean Judy, Albert Dreher, Rolla Williams, Wendell Watt, Louie Thompson, George Church, ——— Corbin, Grant Kinsey, Harry Dreher, Paul Schmidt, ——— Scott, Gus Adams, Harry Watt, Harold Kearney.

## THE FIRE WHISTLE

Many who stillremember the shrill fire alarm of the steam whistle at the waterworks plant will read with interest the following description published in the Atlanta Argus in the issue of April 10, 1896: "The City Council has placed a fire alarm on the waterworks that is a holy terror. It carries calamity in its voice, which is a combination of the war whoop of a Comanche Indian and the dying wail of a stuck pig. It is to be hoped that there will be little necessity for its use."

## THE COAL MINE

Atlanta had visions of a major industry, when in 1867 a company was formed for the purpose of sinking a coal shaft. The boring for coal began Nov. 26 of that year and a good vein of coal was reached at a depth of 245 feet. Owing, however, to the great difficulty experienced in keeping out the water of the underground lake, the project, after repeated efforts, was abandoned.

## THE FOURTH OF JULY RIOT

The Fourth of July riot of 1889 is one of the unpleasant affairs in Atlanta's history. A baseball game, near the Atlanta Fair grounds, broke up in a heated argument and later, when the crowds returned to town, rioting began on the city square. The adherents of Atlanta and Lincoln fought on all sides of the square, and tragedy was averted only when the revolver of policeman Henry Dillon failed to function when he pulled the trigger while he had it pointed at one of the rioters. The disturbance subsided when the evening train came in and Lincoln people boarded it to return home.



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. . . A Panoramic View of the City of ATLANTA taken from the Water Tower about 1898 . . .









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